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SHOPPERS DRUG MART
SEE WHAT'S NEW... CHECK OUT OUR LATEST OFFER ON PAGE 36

Working the LBD

The right accessories will transform your standard little black dress into a glam holiday get-up, like this floral purse/LBD combo rocked by Emma Stone PAGE 37

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B.C.'s tough DUI laws saving lives

Safer roads. Justice Minister Shirley Bond says an estimated 104 lives have been saved due to the tough laws

Laurel Middelaer and Markita Kaulius lost their daughters to drunk drivers, but are comforted to know that B.C.'s tougher impaired-driving laws have cut down alcohol-related fatal crashes by 46 per cent since they were introduced two years ago.

At an event marking the national day of remembrance for road-crash victims and Mothers Against Drunk Driving's 25th annual Project Red Ribbon, Justice Minister Shirley Bond announced that an estimated 104 lives have been saved and deaths caused by impaired driving decreased to an average of 62 a year.

The average for the previous five years was 114.

Laurel Middelaer, whose four-year-old daughter Alexa was killed by a drunk driver in 2008, said she has survived every parent's worst nightmare and takes comfort in knowing that B.C.'s tougher laws have prevented other families from hearing news of losing someone senselessly.

"Body count is not a pleasant way to talk about progress, but it is measurable," she said Wednesday. "One life … one little, tiny blond-haired (girl's) life would make all the difference in the world to me, and we've saved 104."

The government also released data from a survey of drivers in Abbotsford, Kelowna, Prince George, Saanich and Vancouver showing a 44 per cent drop in drivers who had a blood-alcohol level of 0.05 or higher and 60 per cent fewer drivers with a 0.08 blood-alcohol level.

"If you're driving home late at night, the car coming the other (direction) is now far less likely to be driven by a drinking driver," Bond said.

Markita Kaulius, the mother of 22-year-old Kassandra, killed by an impaired driver in Surrey last year, urged everyone to think twice before getting behind the wheel while impaired.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Quoted

"If you're driving home late at night, the car coming the other (direction) is now far less likely to be driven by a drinking driver."

Justice Minister Shirley Bond

Laurel Middelaer, whose four-year-old daughter Alexa was killed by a drunk driver in 2008, at an event marking the national day of remembrance for road-crash victims and Mothers Against Drunk Driving's 25th annual Project Red Ribbon Wednesday in Vancouver. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

0 Christmas tree ornament

Your glamorous sheen delights us, and punches up our decor during this holiday season

PAGE 52

A look at child poverty

The rate of child poverty in B.C. continues to be the second worst in Canada according a new report

PAGE 3

Will the ceasefire last?

That was the question many in Israel and Gaza asked after the two sides agreed to stop the fighting

PAGE 8

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Surrey Hospital

OR open, ER closed

All nine operating rooms at Surrey Memorial Hospital have been reopened after flooding from a broken water main swept through the emergency room on Monday, causing elective surgeries to be cancelled. The Fraser Health Authority says the ORs will be running at full capacity to catch up on the surgeries. The emergency ward will be closed for about two weeks for repairs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Land reassessment

Mayors object to terminal tax cuts

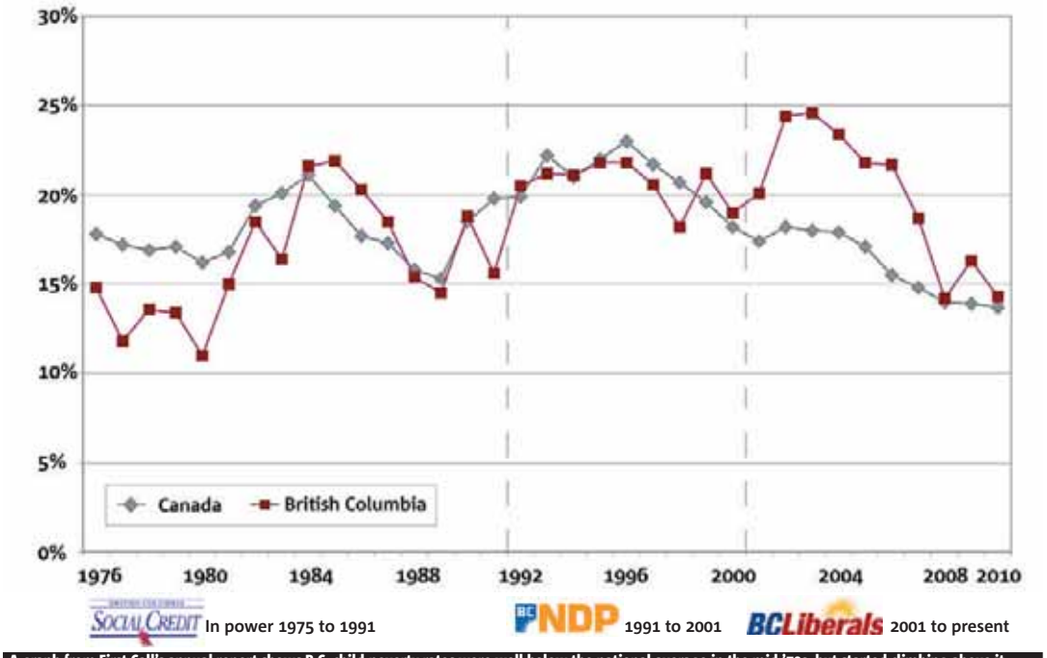
Cities with B.C. Ferry terminals are sounding the alarm after Horseshoe Bay terminal in West Vancouver had its property taxes slashed to $20 from $47 million, leaving a huge hole in the city budget.

The idea is that the land has no market value because it has no other purpose than as a ferry terminal, but Nanaimo Mayor John Ruttan said cities must still pay the costs for water, roads and emergency services leading to the terminals. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wet'suwet'en Nation

Pipeline surveyors turfed from reserve

Surveyors working on a natural-gas pipeline near Terrace have been kicked off some property by a First Nations group that has also set up a roadblock to prevent any other pipeline work. Members of the Wet'suwet'en Nation say surveyors for Apache Canada's Pacific Trails pipeline were trespassing and the province doesn't have the right to approve development on their territory. THE CANADIAN PRESS



A graph from First Call's annual report shows B.C. child-poverty rates were well below the national average in the mid-'70s, but started climbing above it in 1999. The graph was created with data from Statistics Canada. METRO

B.C.'s child-poverty rate still second-worst in Canada

Report card. Meagre social assistance and low minimum wage largely to blame for poverty, expert says

KATE WEBB
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B.C.'s child-poverty rate remained the second-worst of all the provinces in the country in 2010, behind only Manitoba, says an annual report released Wednesday by First Call, a child-advocacy coalition.

Using Statistics Canada data, the authors found 119,000 children were living in poverty in B.C. in 2010, two-thirds of them in Greater Vancouver.

In response, the B.C. NDP called on the government to implement a provincewide poverty-reduction plan, but the Liberals said child poverty has been dropping dramatically since 2003.

Marjorie Griffin Cohen, a Simon Fraser University political economist who studies the impact of government policies on vulnerable populations, said there are many factors that influence child-poverty rates in B.C. The most important are recessions, globalization, wages, social-assistance rates and the federal downloading of responsibility for housing and daycare onto the provinces.

"Right now we're the second-worst but we have been the worst. We were the worst for 10 years running," she said, listing two policies in particular that she believes contributed to a huge spike from 2001 to 2003 and rates far higher than the national average for most of the time since.

"One was the really absolutely abysmal amount that people in poverty were living on through social assistance. The second thing that's been incredibly important in B.C. has been the low-wage strategy of the government. For 10 years almost, we had no increase in the minimum wage."

Cohen cautioned against attributing short-term historical spikes to any one party's policies but said rates were fairly steady under the NDP in the '90s and fell significantly until 1997, when the party began rolling back social assistance.

The election of the B.C. Liberals in 2001 during a mild recession was followed by what she called an "attack on poor people" in which many were cut from social assistance entirely and rates of homelessness began to rise.

"The real boost to child poverty began under the Liberal government," she said.

The B.C. Liberals said in a statement that their continued focus on job creation is one of the best ways to lift people out of poverty, and British Columbians also benefit from one of the lowest overall tax burdens in the country.

The party noted it has raised the minimum wage to $10.25 per hour, but Cohen said a double-income family earning that wage in Metro Vancouver is still living below the poverty line.

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Best startup ecosystem. Vancouver ranks 9th in the world, says report

Vancouver cracked the top 10 in a ranking of the world's best startup ecosystems, a nod that validates the city's efforts to become a hub for high-tech jobs.

The city placed 9th on Startup Genome's ranking of the 20 best cities for high-growth technology startups, beating heavy-hitters such as Chicago, Paris, Sydney and Singapore.

The list is based on extensive analysis of 50,000 startups around the world. It judges startup scenes on criteria including performance, founder talent and how easy it is to get funding.

Perhaps the biggest feather in Vancouver's cap is its No. 2 place on "mindset" — outranked only by top-dog Silicon Valley — which measures how visionary its founders are.

Home to successful startups such as social media manager Hootsuite and online suit retailer Indochino, Vancouver also did well in talent rankings but fell behind in output and funding.

Toronto and Waterloo also made the list in 8th and 16th place respectively, indicating Canada is on its way to becoming a tech hub.

Canada has long tried to keep its entrepreneurs from slipping across the border, but California's active ecosystem often draws the best and brightest. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Ecosystem	Ranking
Silicon Valley	1
Tel Aviv	2
Los Angeles	3
Seattle	4
New York City	5
Boston	6
London	7
Toronto	8
Vancouver	9
Chicago	10
Paris	11
Sydney	12
Sao Paulo	13
Moscow	14
Berlin	15
Waterloo	16
Singapore	17
Melbourne	18
Bangalore	19
Santiago	20

Startup Genome's Top 20 startup ecosystems. CONTRIBUTED

Homicide

Third person charged in Sanders murder

A teenager has been arrested and charged in the murder of Branson Sanders, whose badly burned body was found in a bush in Burnaby in December.

The 16-year-old, who cannot be identified, is charged with first-degree murder and accessory after the fact to murder, said Sgt. Jennifer Pound with the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the initial charges of second-degree murder for Brandon Nandan and Shakib Shakib — who were arrested and charged three months after Sanders' remains were found — have been raised to first degree murder.

They are also facing an additional charge each of indignity to a dead body. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Former MLA Lorne Mayencourt will run against former mayor Sam Sullivan for the Vancouver–False Creek B.C. Liberal nomination. EMILY JACKSON/METRO

Former MLA takes on city's ex-mayor

Battleground False Creek. Mayencourt joins race for B.C. Liberal nomination after taking break from provincial politics

EMILY JACKSON
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The rumours are true — former MLA Lorne Mayencourt has finally confirmed speculation he'll compete against former mayor Sam Sullivan for the B.C. Liberal nomination in Vancouver–False Creek.

"I'm really excited to have made the decision," Mayencourt said at Yaletown restaurant La Terrazza on Wednesday. He's "quite linked" to the riding that includes about one-third of the former Vancouver-Burrard riding, which he represented from 2001 to 2008.

And he's "not too worried" about going up against Sullivan in what's sure to be a close race between two highly recognized politicians. (Consultant Mary Pynenburg and lawyers Jacob Kojfman and Brian Fixter will also run, he said.)

"I've never been in a predictable race — once I won with 11 votes," he said.

His experience and knowledge of how the legislative process works set him apart, he said. Sullivan has experience only in municipal politics.

"What I learned is that in provincial politics you're pretty close to the ground," Mayencourt said, pointing to education and health care. "That's where you can make a difference or a positive impact for the people of B.C."

Mayencourt took a break from provincial politics to unsuccessfully run for the federal Conservatives in 2008. He also founded an addiction-treatment centre in Prince George. For the past two years, he mentored MLAs in Victoria.

While he distanced himself from the federal party, he is a staunch supporter of Premier Christy Clark despite polls suggesting the NDP and its leader, Adrian Dix, are more popular.

"I think that it's really important that people understand Christy Clark," he said. She is committed to engaging people in discussion and believes it's essential to consult the public, he said.

"To borrow a phrase, the rumours of the B.C. Liberals' death have been greatly exaggerated."

Digital-media entrepreneur Matt Toner has already been selected as the NDP candidate in the riding.

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Santa Claus is coming ... to Yaletown? CONTRIBUTED/YALETOWN BIA

Yaletown set for Candytown transformation

Sugar-coating the town. Event organizers to accept donations for B.C. charities at free family event

KATE WEBB
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Where can you find Trevor Linden, a maple-sugar shack, Santa and a live reindeer all in one place?

Why, Yaletown, of course, which will transform into a magical place called Candytown this Friday and Saturday. Besides the former Canuck and the big man in red, the first-of-its-kind festival promises a cocktail crawl and free ice skating — which this reporter cheekily suggests are as fine a pairing as cookies and milk.

Yaletown Business Improvement Association executive director Annette O'Shea said the BIA came up with the idea during a brainstorm earlier this year.

"We wanted to do something a little bit different, and then somebody said, 'You remember we used to play that game Candyland when we were kids?' And it turned out every single person around the table remembered Gumdrop Mountain and Ice Cream Sea and Peppermint Forest," she said.

The BIA decided to try to recreate the feeling of the game and plans to expand on the theme next year, but it already has tons of candy characters and free activities lined up for this year. It all centres around a Christmas market that will shut down Mainland Street for two days.

No need to worry about the rain: The synthetic ice rink will hold up, whatever the weather, with free skate and helmet rentals for adults and kids.

The schedule

What: 1st annual Candytown Festival.
When: Friday from 3 to 9 p.m. and Saturday from 12 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Where: Mainland Street and around Yaletown.
Cost: Free.

Highlights:

- **Canuck.** Trevor Linden skates with kids' groups and Scotiabank VIP customers at noon, then signs autographs for free from 1 to 3 p.m. Friday.
- **Rink.** Scotiabank Yaletown Skating Rink open from 3 to 9 p.m. Friday, and 12 to 9 p.m. Saturday.
- **Carriage rides.** Free 15-minute horse-drawn carriage rides both days.

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An aerial shot of the North Pole shows the light of 1,854,237,899 Kobo Glos ready to be tucked under every tree on Christmas Eve. Photo courtesy of Capt. Dave Mottola — Space Station.

SOURCE OF MYSTERIOUS NORTH POLE GLOW REVEALED

BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG READERS

Noëlle Johnson
Holiday Happenings

All eyes were on the North Pole earlier this week when a mysterious light began emanating from the heart of Santa's Village. Speculation has mounted, leading to rumours about Santa's well being and a possible Alien invasion. Scientists have been baffled; astronomers were completely stumped.

But a well-timed message from Santa's Village HQ tells us not to fear. No Grinch or Martian has taken over Santa's workshop. The truth is actually quite magical. As the fate of Christmas 2012 seemed to lie in the balance, elves have been developing a magical eReader designed to light up the holiday season.

The new eReader is called Kobo Glo and the source of its magic power lies in its revolutionary ComfortLight technology. "ComfortLight is an incredibly even, adjustable front-light for reading day or night," says Santa.

"Rudolph has been a huge inspiration. He knows first-hand how important a built-in light is late at night, and how fathers enjoy reading bedtime stories to their kids. That's why Rudolph added the perfect touch of magic to each Kobo Glo. Now, thanks to ComfortLight, we can bring the joy of comfortable reading to every reader any time, especially on those long winter nights."

Santa calls Kobo Glo a fully portable library. How'd they do it? He explains: "Kobo Glo has built-in storage for up to 1,000 eBooks with the option to expand up to 30,000 with Micro SD cards. Running out of eBooks is something we all want to avoid.

"That's why each Kobo Glo is linked directly to the Kobo eBookstore for easy access to over 3 million eBooks. And there's something for everyone, from history buffs to fiction fanatics and everyone in between."

And, from the sounds of it, the 6-inch XGA high-res Pearl E Ink touchscreen was designed to read beautifully in any lighting condition.

"Our goal was to create the perfect reading experience, while giving readers control of their own experience. They can adjust the brightness of ComfortLight, as well as choose from 8 font styles in 24 sizes with a tap," says Santa. "And with the magic of E Ink, each word is crisp and clear (and 28% sharper than before*), even in the brightest sunlight."

Christmas is coming up, so you can expect the North Pole Glow to get brighter as Santa's elves build eReaders for readers around the world. Look for one under your tree this Christmas.

If you want to learn more, visit ***northpoleglo.com*** and discover the magic behind every story and share a classic Christmas eBook with your family and friends.

Get into the magic of the season with Kobo Glo.

* As compared to Kobo Touch.

It's a Gaza deal ... after 1,500 air strikes and 1,500 rocket attacks

The question. Can two bitter foes, Israel and Hamas, make the ceasefire hold?

Will it last?

That was the question being asked in Israel and Gaza on Wednesday as a ceasefire was forged after an incredible two days of intense shuttle diplomacy.

"I just hope they commit to peace," said Abdel-Nasser al-Tom, from northern Gaza.

Despite the fears, joy broke out like an explosion.

Cheering Gazans emerged from their homes after a week, flooding the streets in wild celebration.

Gunmen fired in the air, and chants of "God is great" echoed from mosque loudspeakers.

Residents hugged and kissed in celebration, while others distributed candy and waved Hamas flags.

Israel and the Hamas militant group agreed to the ceasefire Wednesday after eight days of the fiercest fighting in nearly four years.

They promised to halt air strikes and rocket attacks that have killed scores and to ease an Israeli blockade constricting the Gaza Strip.

The truce will "improve conditions for the people of Gaza and provide security for the people of Israel," U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said in Cairo.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Morsi's moment

The ceasefire deal marks a startling trajectory for the mediator — Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi.

- **New role.** The man who refused to talk to the Israelis or even say the country's name finally turned himself into Israel's protector.

In this image taken from Egyptian state television, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton shakes hands with Egypt's foreign minister, Mohammed Kamel Amr, in Cairo after a ceasefire was announced between Israel and Hamas. Clinton shuttled across the region to help end the fighting. EGYPTIAN STATE TELEVISION/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baird speaks out

Hamas and Israel? It's not complex

There has been nothing complicated about the conflict between Israel and Hamas, says Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird.

John Baird

"It's not a complex issue," he said as a ceasefire was declared.

"You have a terrorist group launching rockets against Israel."

But the broader question of Mideast peace is far more complicated, he stressed, adding he's "cautiously optimistic" about the ceasefire.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Watchdog takes Tories to court

Matter of jurisdiction. Budget officer taking on creators of his job over withheld figures

Canada's budget watchdog is taking the Harper government to court over its refusal to turn over information about austerity measures.

Parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page on Wednesday filed a reference application with the Federal Court seeking a judgment affirming he has the jurisdiction to search for the information.

In a covering letter signed by Ottawa constitutional lawyer Joseph Magnet and Tolga Yalkin of the PBO, Page cites the "urgency" of resolving the issue quickly and proposes numerous dates for the hearing from Nov. 29 to Jan. 11.

The budget officer has complained for months that government departments have not been forthcoming with his requests on budget cuts, staff reductions and impacts on services.

In response, the government said Page is overreaching and that his mandate is to examine government spending, not government restraint.

Opposition leaders said Page had no choice but to go to court to perform his duty and accused the Conservatives of carrying out a vendetta against the budget officer, a position they created.

"They've done everything to shut down Kevin Page since he started in that job," said NDP Leader Tom Mulcair.

Parliamentary budget officer Kevin Page has filed an application with the Federal Court to ensure he can get access to information. THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty said the government only wants Page to follow his mandate, which he described as reporting to MPs on the budget process and spending measures.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Spills and shills

Liberal critic calls Cons lackeys for Big Oil, resigns

Ottawa MP David McGuinty abruptly resigned as the Liberal party's natural resources critic Wednesday after suggesting Conservative MPs from Alberta are shills for the oil industry and should go home.

His statements capped a day in which Liberals scrambled to contain the damage from his remarks, which came just days before a byelection in Calgary, where the Liberals have high hopes for an upset.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Online privacy

Facebook mulls an end to brush with democracy

Facebook is proposing to end its practice of letting users vote on changes to its privacy policies.

The company said Wednesday that its system emphasizes quantity of responses over quality. As part of the 2009 policy, votes only count if over 30 per cent of all Facebook's active users partake. That did not happen during either of two opportunities and it's unlikely it will now, as more than 300 million people would have to participate.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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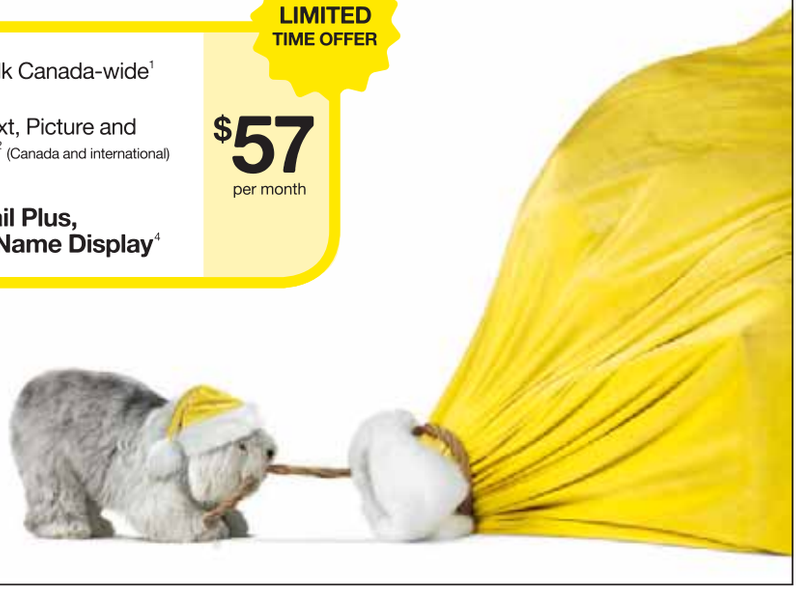

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Only surviving gunman of Mumbai attacks executed

26-11. Secret hanging sparks celebrations for some while offering others a hollow closure

Members of the Bharatiya Janata Party celebrate the news of Mohammed Ajmal Kasab's execution in Mumbai on Wednesday.

RAFIG MAGBOOL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

India executed the lone surviving gunman from the Mumbai terror attacks early Wednesday, four years after Pakistani gunmen blazed through India's financial capital, killing 166 people over three days in November 2008.

Mohammed Ajmal Kasab, a Pakistani citizen, was hung in secrecy at a jail in Pune, a city near Mumbai, after Indian President Pranab Mukherjee rejected his plea for clemency.

News of the execution was widely cheered in India, with political parties organizing public celebrations and some people setting off firecrackers. But for those more deeply touched by the events of 26-11, as the attack is known in India, the hanging offered only a partial catharsis.

Indian officials accuse Pakistan's intelligence agency of working with the militant group Lashkar-e-Taiba to plan the attack.

India and Pakistan, which have fought three wars since they were carved out of British India in 1947, suspended peace talks after the Mumbai attack.

The two countries rekindled the peace talks in 2011, but New Delhi's frustration with Pakistan's failure to bring those responsible for the attack to justice has complicated those efforts.

Some in India felt Kasab should have been hanged publicly. Others complained that the government had already spent too much money on a vilified criminal.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"This is an incomplete justice as the masterminds of 26-11 are still absconding."

Widow Kavita Karkare on the execution of gunman Mohammed Ajmal Kasab. Her husband, the chief of Mumbai's anti-terrorism squad, was killed during the attacks.

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World carbon emissions still too high: UN

Fossil fuels. UN report comes ahead of major climate conference

A UN report on rising greenhouse-gas emissions reminded world governments Wednesday that their efforts to fight climate change are far from enough to meet their goal of limiting global warming to 2 C.

The report by the UN Environment Program, released just days ahead of a major climate conference, said the concentration of heat-trapping greenhouse gases in the atmosphere is up about 20 per cent since 2000.

Scientists say those emissions are contributing to climate change and that failure to contain them could have dangerous consequences, including rising sea levels inundating coastal cities, dramatic shifts in rainfall disrupting agriculture and drinking water, the spread of diseases and the extinction of species.

Emissions levels, driven by the burning of fossil fuels, need to come down by 14 per cent by 2020 for the world to reach a pathway that could keep the global temperature rise below 2 C, compared with pre-industrial levels, UNEP said. That's the stated goal of UN climate negotiations, which resume next week in Doha, Qatar.

But it won't happen if countries don't come ahead with more ambitious plans than what's currently on the table. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"A transition to a low-carbon, inclusive Green Economy is happening far too slowly."

UNEP executive director Achim Steiner

Steam and smoke rise from a coal-burning power plant in Germany.
MARTIN MEISSNER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Reproductive health

Fewer abortions may be due to increase in birth control

U.S. abortions fell five per cent during the recession and its aftermath in the biggest one-year decrease in at least a decade, perhaps because women are more careful to use birth control when times are tough, researchers say.

Abortions have been dropping slightly over much of the past decade.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Church rift

Failure to approve female bishops raises hell in the U.K.

The Church of England has some explaining to do following its failure to vote to let women serve as bishops, its leader said Wednesday, and politicians from the prime minister downward are already demanding action or answers. Bishops and clergy overwhelmingly backed the proposal.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Radiation-proof robot may help at Fukushima

Japan. Toshiba's new four-legged machine was designed to go into tsunami-crippled nuclear plant

Toshiba's nuclear inspection robot climbs stairs during a demonstration at a factory west of Tokyo on Wednesday. The robot can venture into radiated areas off-limits to human workers. ITSUO INOUYE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Toshiba Corp. unveiled a robot Wednesday that the company says can withstand high radiation and help in nuclear disasters. But it remains unclear what exactly the new machine will be capable of doing if and when it gets the go-ahead to enter Japan's crippled Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant.

The four-legged robot can climb over debris and venture into radiated areas off-limits to human workers. One significant innovation, Toshiba said, is that its wireless network can be controlled in high radiation, automatically seeking better transmission when reception becomes weak.

But the machine, which looks like an ice cooler on wobbly metal legs, also appears prone to glitches. The robot took a jerky misstep during a demonstration to reporters, freezing with one leg up in the air. It had to be lifted by several people and rebooted.

It was also notably slow in climbing a flight of eight steps, cautiously lifting its legs one by one, and taking about a minute to go up each step. With obstacles that aren't as even and predictable as steps, such as the debris at the plant, it may need as much as 10 minutes to figure out how to clear the object.

Still, Tokyo Electric Power Co. said it might use the robot to inspect the suppression chamber of the Fukushima plant, where a meltdown took place after a mammoth tsunami slammed into northeastern Japan on March 11, 2011.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Holiday shoppers not too keen on apps, survey finds

Retail. Mobile discount-hunting can give buyers an edge, but it's been slow to catch on in Canada

An Associated Press reporter demonstrates a shopping app on her phone in San Francisco. While there are a slew of smartphone apps that can help save time and money this holiday season, a new survey suggests most Canadians don't plan on using them. JEFF CHIU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Smartphones can scan barcodes and offer real-time discounts but most Canadians won't bother using apps while shopping this holiday season, a new survey suggests.

About 70 per cent of those surveyed weren't planning to use a mobile application or feature to help buy gifts, according to the results of a poll commissioned by wireless carrier Mobilicity.

Smartphone apps can give users notifications of what discounts are being offered in a mall and at what stores, said Anthony Booth, Mobilicity's chief customer officer.

"The real astute users are the people who have figured out how to take advantage of things in real time by using their smartphone," Booth said from Toronto.

Black Friday, the day after U.S. Thanksgiving, has come to Canada and generally marks the beginning of the holiday shopping season. Apps such as TGI Black Friday and Black Friday Deals and Coupons allows smartphone users to search from thousands discounts.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Replaced by iPhones

Another U.S. agency stops using BlackBerrys

BlackBerry smartphones are being dropped by the U.S. National Transportation Safety Board in favour of the new iPhone 5, with "performance issues" cited as the reason.

The Washington-based board, the latest American government agency to turn away from the BlackBerry, said it needs reliable devices for its employees to investigate accidents, often in remote locations.

"These Apple devices will replace the NTSB's existing BlackBerry devices, which have been failing both at inopportune times and at an unacceptable rate," the board said in a recent document. Research In Motion has lost several other U.S. departments and agencies as clients.

Although the National Transportation Safety Board didn't go into many details about why it's dropping BlackBerry smartphones, RIM has had two email and text-message service outages in the last year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NHL COMMISSIONER GETS CANDID

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

What follows is an exclusive, in-good-faith "marathon" interview with Gary Bettman, commissioner of the National Hockey League.

While it's true the commissioner has been talking to other media throughout the NHL lockout, Mr. Bettman told me some exclusive things — things so striking and unexpected that he may deny ever having talked to me, or, indeed, having heard of me.

NHL insiders say that, using the logic of contract negations, his refusal to acknowledge my existence is a sign our talk went well.

He Says: Mr. Bettman, let's drop the gloves. What can the league do to win back fans after this lockout, which everybody outside of the players and owners believes was unnecessary and wrong?

Bettman: Well, we're very fortunate to have great fans in Canada that have nothing else to do in the winter that isn't illegal. As for Americans, they haven't noticed yet that we've been gone. So don't tell them, OK?

He Says: Don't you think this cavalier attitude will only reinforce Canadians' belief that you don't care about the fans, delivering a Raffi Torres-like check to the head to our national game?

Bettman: Well, first of all, I don't know what a Raffi Torres is, but let me say that I'm confident the fans will be back.

He Says: How can you be so sure?

Straight talk

"The players will always be at a disadvantage in contract negotiations, because they're heroes betraying their fans."

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman, in an honest interview with He Says

Bettman: If you read news reports from after the last lockout, you see headlines like: "Hockey: Does anyone still care?" next to headlines like, "Maple Leafs' second-unit penalty kill needs tweaking or heads will roll."

He Says: I see your point. But the NHL game was, before The Lockout: Part 2, at the height of its popularity. The hockey was faster, the women behind the benches were hotter, and mentions in late-night comedy monologues were at an all-time low. How did you kill all that momentum?

Bettman: You have to understand that there's been a huge philosophical divide between each side.

He Says: I noticed that in the various proposals. The players said the repeating lockout was an example of Nietzsche's eternal recurrence, while you adhered to the deconstructionism of Jacques Derrida, refusing to make whole.

Bettman: We spent one meeting talking about whether contract negotiations really mean anything in a cold, uncaring universe. We found a lot of common ground there. But that's not what I meant. What I meant is that we have a different attitude than the players, because we don't care what people think of us.

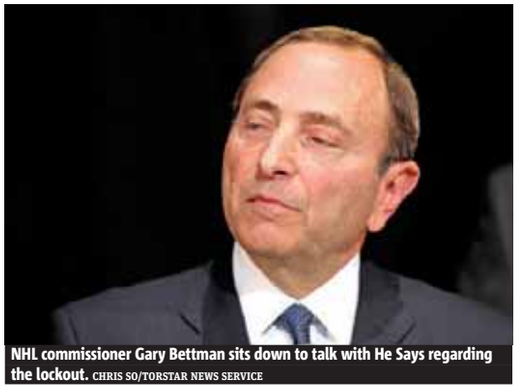
He Says: That's refreshingly honest.

Bettman: The players will always be at a disadvantage in contract negotiations, because they're heroes betraying their fans. But the management don't have to be heroes. No Canadian kid says, "I want to be an owner." Or commissioner. Keep it under your helmet, but I'm not very popular.

He Says: Your secret's safe with me. I want to thank you for your candour, Mr. Bettman. And remember, keep your stick on the ice.

Bettman: I'm sorry, what?

He Says: Uh, just forget it.



NHL commissioner Gary Bettman sits down to talk with He Says regarding the lockout. CHRIS SO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Choo-choo-chocolatey express

YVES LOGGHE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World record

Longest chocolate structure rolls into Brussels

Commuters take pictures of the world's longest chocolate structure as it is displayed at Brussels Midi train station on Wednesday.

The train, which took 784 hours of labour to create, measures 34.05 metres (111 feet) in total length and was prepared with 1,285 kilograms (2,832 pounds) of Belgian chocolate and was built by master chocolatier Andrew Farrugia from Malta.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's as long as...

Let's see what else compares to the 111 feet of chocolatey heaven.

- **NBA basketball court.** An NBA basketball court is just a smidgen shorter than the train, measuring 94 feet long.
- **Baseball diamond.** The distance between each base in a baseball diamond is 90 feet.
- **The Mayflower.** The ship that transported English and Dutch Separatists to Massachusetts was 100 feet long, slightly shorter than the chocolatey train.

Culinary concoctions

It's a sweet time to be a world-record holder. Here's some other culinary concoctions that have set world records recently.

- **Cream cake.** Chefs in Switzerland took the title for the longest cake ever — a whopping 1,200 metres (3,937 feet) of sugar, flour and cream in November 2012. That's more than a kilometre of cake!
- **Chocolate bar.** The longest chocolate bar was measured at 15.9 metres (52 feet) long and 2.03 metres (6.7 feet) wide in Bologna, Italy, in 2011.

Calorie counting

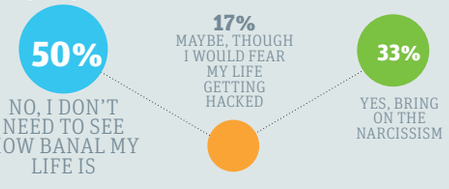
6.5M

The model train packs an impressive 6.5 million calories. But the train isn't the largest chocolate structure in the world. That title goes to a California bakery that built a massive Mayan temple out of the dark sweet that weighs three times as much as the train.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Would you buy an attachable camera that snaps thousands of pictures of your life every day?



Twitter

@SeanBickerton: No excuse for 1 of wealthiest provinces like BC to hv lowest NA corp taxes yet CDAs 2nd-highest child-poverty rate

@bcpoli_watcher: So many scandals. New scandals mask old scandals. Caucus attack ad, scandal comment, please. #bcpoli

@MillsMeg: When 43% of kids in poverty live in families with at least 1 working adult, something needs to change #bcpoli #childpoverty2012

@IanVancouver: @BCLiberalCaucus #bcpoli here's what BCLibs are doing to reduce child poverty: not enough.

@melyoo: Turning the roof of a parkade into Vancouver's first local garden vertical farm - so so cool!

metro

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The Punch Brothers play at the Chan Centre at UBC this Saturday. SUBMITTED

Bluegrass band ready to deliver punchy performance

Young and talented. Punch Brothers bring an unmatchable energy and skill to their music

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

Let's get one thing straight: the Punch Brothers are not a wrestling act, a boxing family or a couple of barbros who concoct deliciously-spiked fruit-based beverages.

They're in fact a five-member string band that have got something old, something new and yes, something blue.

"Blue", in this case, is for bluegrass. There's also some jazz, classical and rock in the mix.

Oh, and one genius.

Some context: The band was formed back in 2006 and features singer and mandolin player Chris Thile, Gabe Witcher (violin), Chris Eldridge (guitar), Noam Pikelny (banjo), and bassist Paul Kowert.

Singer Thile recently received the MacArthur Foundation Genius Grant.

The prestigious award — which comes with a whopping $500,000 payday — is awarded annually to 23 individuals considered to be geniuses within their respective fields.

Only two musicians got it. And Thile, at 31, is this year's youngest recipient.

Joyce Hinton, co-managing director of the Chan Centre, also "got it" when she saw the band perform in New York City.

"I first heard (them) in a crowded underground music club and instantly knew I was witnessing something very special.

"These young artists were achieving a level of sophistication and complexity I had never experienced with this type of music. What's more, they were doing it with such charm and charisma that the massed crush of New Yorkers were stamping and cheering along with abandon."

Hey — if New Yorkers can do it, we can too.

The Punch Brothers debut in Vancouver this Saturday at the Chan Shun Concert Hall at UBC (part of the Chan Centre). Tickets are $36 to $72 and are available via ticketmaster.ca.

Visit chancentre.ca for more information.

Quoted

"I first heard (them) in a crowded underground music club and instantly knew I was witnessing something very special"

Joyce Hinton, co-managing director at the Chan Centre

Other happenings

- **Check out Reflections.** Art for an Oil-Free Coast Exhibition at Performance Works Theatre on Granville Island from Nov. 27 to Dec. 1. More information at Raincoast.org.
- **The Santaland Diaries.** The show opens tonight and runs until Dec. 22 at the Arts Club Revue Stage on Granville Island. Written by David Sedaris and starring Ryan Beil. Visit artsclub.com for more information about the event.

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Singer Aimee Mann has turned to an AM radio hit for inspiration on her new album. GETTY IMAGES

Mann details the less than charmed life indie musicians live

New album. Aimee Mann reveals unique inspiration behind latest effort and the struggles facing modern artists

The musical inspiration for Aimee Mann's latest disc may come as a surprise. It certainly did for Larry Lee.

Mann's Charmer hearkens back to the pop-rock structures of her 1990s discs Whatever and I'm With Stupid, and ultimately even further, to radio-friendly hits from 30 and 40 years ago. That's her pop music, not the kind made by Taylor Swift, Beyoncé or Katy Perry. In fact, she zeroed in on one song in particular: Jackie Blue, a 1975 hit by the Ozark Mountain Daredevils.

"To me, that's the perfect pop song and was kind of the touchstone for the whole record," said Mann, who's 52. "In fact, there are certain songs (on Charmer) where it's basically a homage to that song."

Charmer, which debuted at No. 33 on Billboard's 200 albums chart in September, is not a concept album, but Mann finds discs that are more than a collection of unrelated songs more satisfying to the artist and listener.

Mann went through record company nightmares early in her career, and now makes music on her own label, SuperEgo. That doesn't make her immune to the industry's problems. She said many fans can't see the connection between illegally downloading music and the struggles of their favourite artists.

"If I don't have enough money to make another album, I can't make another album," she said. "That's how it goes. You can't think about it. Am I suddenly going to appeal to people's consciences and make them not steal music? If you don't like it, great, then I can understand you not buying it. But if you like it and end up stealing it, then I just think you're a jerk. Of all the people to steal from. Musicians? Really?"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Music videos

Two videos for Charmer give Mann the chance to display her humour

- **Big names.** Jon Hamm and humorists Tom Scharpling and Jon Wurster appear in the video for Labrador. It shows Mann tricked into remaking the video for Voices Carry, her 1985 hit.

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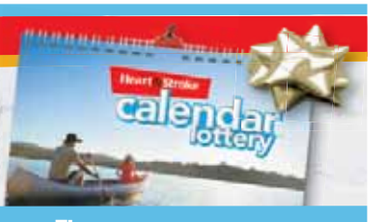

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Alec sharpens Claus for edgy festive role

Rise of the Guardians. Baldwin voices an alternate Santa covered in tattoos for new animated film

OLIVIA MORROW
Metro World News in New York

Alec Baldwin is widely recognized for the huge variety of roles he's played throughout his long, successful career, but you might not have expected him to tackle his latest character in the Dreamworks animated film, Rise of the Guardians.

Baldwin gives voice to an unconventional Santa Claus, with a thick, brutish accent and arms full of tattoos. One of the film's producers, Christina Steinberg, puts it perfectly: "Who's more naughty and nice than Alec?"

Although Baldwin has voiced numerous characters in past films — including Madagascar 2 and Cats & Dogs — you'd expect that children's films wouldn't be of much appeal considering his only daughter is now a teenager.

"I think that people all say that they want to ... do this children's programming for your kids," he says. "My daughter is 17 now, my daughter is watching God-knows-what.

"It's kind of frightening, but I think that when they showed me that these were going to be edgier versions of these characters — when you see the Santa Claus figure it's usually ... a rosy-cheeked, saintly man with not a lot of dimension — (it) was a lot more real, so I loved that."

Baldwin talked about his personal beliefs regarding Santa Claus when he was a child and how he discovered it was all a myth: "I walked into a room and my sister was wrapping presents with my mother and I was like, 'Wait, what?'" he explains.

"I think they only told me because the more kids my mother had, the more wrapping they had to do. I immediately became enlisted as a wrapper."

But just what was it like for Baldwin to play the legendary character?

"The key with these kinds of films is to work your way toward a much warmer kind of humanistic place, literally in your voice. ... The thing for me is to try to vary the tone. ... You want to try to keep it warm, there's a great deal of love and warmth in the piece, (but) there's always a chance to make it really, really bombastic, especially with the Santa Claus character.

"There's a chance to make it very strident. The guy is very, very powerful in some scenes — but in other scenes you want to make it silly and fun and child-friendly."

What's next?

Quality over quantity. As he prepares to say goodbye to 30 Rock, it seems Baldwin's life is slowing down, as he says his career is all about quality rather than quantity now. "I'd rather just stay home with my wife and my two dogs and watch TV now. I'd rather watch a movie than make a movie any day," he says.

On Turning 50. "I'm at a stage now where it's more like when you were a child where you're very present. When you're kids, everything is very small. ... Then you turn 50 — the world becomes a lot smaller and you'd rather do less things and do them well and have a more satisfying personal life."

Alec Baldwin gives a new voice to Santa Claus. GETTY IMAGE

Mercedes SL AMG

BENZ'S BROAD APPROACH

In the spirit of cutting fuel consumption, Mercedes-Benz is taking a rather broad approach by using common smaller engines that actually make more horsepower. This is accomplished by turbocharging, which relies on you to keep your foot out of it to gain some fuel savings.

Aside from an updated six-cylinder diesel that makes more power and torque, there's a new four-cylinder turbo-diesel in the GLK tall wagon that makes 190 horsepower and an astonishing 369 pound-feet of torque. That's about triple what a gas engine of the same displacement would yield. So while there's plenty of focus under the hood of just about every Benz, there are still three new models for 2013.

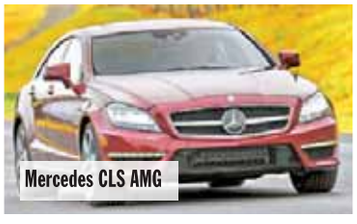
In a class by itself — the AMG class, that is — is the GL63 with its prodigious 550 horses. All editions arrive with seven-speed automatic transmissions plus M-B's impressive 4MATIC all-wheel-drive that specializes in providing secure all-conditions traction. Should you choose to risk your significant cash outlay by taking your Mercedes off the pavement, you can opt for an On/Off-Road package that includes a two-speed transfer case with a low range, locking differentials and skid plates to protect the underbelly. It also includes a modified air suspension that raises maximum ground clearance by your choice of three, 6.1 and 8.9 centimetres above the standard 21.6 centimetres of ground clearance. This is accomplished using the standard adjustable AIRMATIC system.

In other news, the SL name reaches the big six-oh for 2013 and what better way to celebrate than by launching a new generation of this iconic luxury sports car. The all-twin-turbocharged engine lineup starts with the base SL550 that uses a smaller 4.6-litre V8 (down from 5.5 litres), but output is now pegged at 429 horsepower, versus 382 for the pervious 5.5. Fuel economy has also picked up a bit. Part of the improvement comes from the installation of technology that shuts off the engine when stopped, then fires it up again when the accelerator pedal is depressed.

Back again in all their high-performance magnificence are the SL63 AMG and SL65 AMG. The former arrives with a twin-turbocharged 530 horsepower, 5.5-litre V8. Meanwhile, the 6.0-litre V12 in the SL65 AMG that was last seen in 2011 is rated at 621 horsepower (up from 604). A seven-speed automatic transmission is used in all models.

In addition, all SLs feature a folding hardtop that can be raised or lowered in 16 seconds and comes with a see-through Panorama sunroof. The top's optional Magic Sky Control changes the panel to tinted from clear with the flick of a switch.

– wheelbasemedia.com


Mercedes CLS AMG

Mercedes C AMG

Mercedes SL

BASE PRICES (INCL. DESTINATION)

C-Class: Compact sedan; $39,300
C-Class Coupe: Compact sedan; $42,800
CL-Class: Full-size coupe; $138,600
CLS-Class: Mid-sized sedan; $86,800
E-Class: Full-sized sedan; $60,300
E-Class: Full-sized coupe; $63,400
E-Class: Full-sized convertible; $71,200
S-Class: Full-size sedan; $120,100
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©2012 smart Canada, a Division of Mercedes-Benz Canada Inc. Vehicle shown is the smart fortwo passion with optional equipment at an extra cost. [1]Total price is based on a smart fortwo pure, National MSRP of $14,400. Total price and down payment include charges of $2,060.48, consisting of freight/PDI of $1,395, dealer admin fee of $495, air-conditioning levy of $100, PPSA up to $50.48 and a $20.00 fee covering EHF tires, filters and batteries (taxes are extra). [2]Lease offer based on a new 2013 smart pure available only through Mercedes-Benz Financial Services on approved credit, for a limited time. Lease example is based on a 24-month term and a lease APR of 0.9% and an MSRP of $14,400. Monthly payment is $99 (excluding taxes) with 12,000 km/year allowance ($0.20/km for excess kilometers applies). Due on delivery is $2,410 down payment plus first month payment (plus taxes) for a total of $2810. Cost of borrowing is $175.51 for a total obligation of $5,360. Vehicle license, insurance, and registration are extra. Dealer may lease or finance for less. Offers may change without notice and cannot be combined with any other offers. See your authorized Mercedes-Benz Vancouver dealer for details or call the Mercedes-Benz Vancouver Customer Care at 604-331-BENZ (2369). Offer ends November 30, 2012.

NOTHING QUITE LIKE IT

LINCOLN MKZ STANDS OUT

Lincoln MKZ

The farther down the road Lincoln drives, the more it seems to come into its own as a source of elegant, but-not-too pricey wheels. The thoroughly altered 2013 MKZ stands out with its nothing-quite-like-it appearance.

The signature "waterfall" grille has been replaced by a series of horizontal bars that kind of resemble the shape of a flying bird with headlights at the tips.

But for real design drama you can't beat the sweep of the roofline that flows well past the rear-most roof pillar, almost to the trailing edge of the body.

The car's massive windshield and rear window glass, including the optional retractable panoramic sunroof, makes it doubtful passenger claustrophobia will pose a problem.

Inside is an ultra-sophisticated leather-covered and wood-trimmed interior plus a floor console extending seamlessly almost the full length of the cabin. In back, optional inflatable seatbelts for outboard riders cushion their heads and necks in the event of frontal crash.

In the suspension department, continuously adjustable shock damping, power-assisted electric steering, variable transmission-shift-mapping plus traction and stability control all combine to form Lincoln Drive Control. The result, says Lincoln, is improved ride and handling in Normal, Sport, or Comfort modes, as selected by the driver. A push-button gear selector next to the gauges replaces the traditional floor shifter.

Powerplant choices consist of a 240-horsepower, 2.0-litre four-cylinder "EcoBoost" (turbocharged) four-cylinder. Optional is a 300-horsepower, 3.7-litre V6 that Ford installs in vehicles as diverse as the Mustang two-door and F-150 pickup. For maximum fuel savings, the MKZ returns with a gasoline-electric hybrid fitted with a 141-horsepower 2.0-litre four-cylinder combined with an electric motor worth a combined 188 horsepower.

– wheelbasemedia.com

BASE PRICES (INCL. DESTINATION)

MKS: Full-size pickup, $49,300
MKT: Full-size wagon, $50,650
MKZ: Mid-size sedan; $39,000 (est.)

MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME

LEXUS UNVEILS REWORKED LINEUP

Lexus ES 350

Well, if what you get out of something is in direct proportion to what you put into it, then Lexus is about to reap some major rewards for a vastly reworked lineup, with two brand new models and a couple of others that have been beautifully updated for 2013.

This effort might come as a bit of a shock considering that Lexus and parent company Toyota were largely crippled during the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake and resulting tsunami that laid waste to Japan's coastal cities. Clearly, Lexus is making up for lost time, so the flurry of activity actually seems about right.

The Toyota Camry-based ES is Lexus's go-to entry-luxury model, even though the sportier IS is less expensive. In this league, size counts for plenty and the longer, wider and roomier ES beats the pants off the IS in the space race.

For 2013, interior volume has increased with the addition of nearly five centimetres between the front and rear wheels. Considerable sparkle has been added to what had been a design that for years was unnecessarily understated. The 268-horsepower, 3.5-litre V6 and six-speed automatic transmission carry over virtually unchanged from the 2012 edition, but what's really new is the ES 300h hybrid with its 156-horsepower, 2.5-litre four-cylinder gas engine that combines with a 141-horsepower electric motor to generate 200 net horsepower.

The hybrid borrows its powertrain from the Toyota Camry hybrid and represents a natural extension of the ES brand, especially since the recent demise of the Toyota Prius-based HS 250h sedan. The new rear-drive GS is larger and priced significantly higher than the ES. It's also helping lead Lexus out of the design doldrums where, along with many of its stable mates, the car has resided for the past number of years. Nothing overly radical, mind you, since it shares many physical and mechanical components with its 2012 counterparts.

But front and rear revisions are obvious. Gone for 2013 is the V8 option, which leaves the GS 350 and its gasoline-electric hybrid GS 450h as the only available models.

The F Sport upgrade uses the same carryover 306-horsepower, 3.5-litre V6 as the standard GS 350. Both feature a six-speed automatic transmission, however an extra level on the standard driver-selectable operating mode has been added that firms up the suspension and sharpens the steering for an overall sportier feel. F Sport and the GS 450h are offered in rear-wheel-drive only.

– wheelbasemedia.com

BASE PRICES (INCL. DESTINATION)

CT 200H: Four-door hatchback hybrid: $32,900
ES 350: Mid-size sedan; $41,000
GS 350: Mid-size sedan; $53,200
IS 250: Compact sedan; $36,250
IS-F: Quick-and-fast compact sedan; $71,900
LS 460: Full-size sedan; $85,000
LS 600h L: Full-size sedan; $123,750

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Representative financing example based on 2013 Rio5 LX+ AT (RO753D) with a selling price of $19,572 (includes delivery and destination fees of $1,455, $1,000 Everybody Wins savings, other fees and certain levies (including tire levies) and A/C charge ($100, where applicable)) financed at 0% APR for 36 months. 78 bi-weekly payments equal $225 per payment with a down payment/equivalent trade of $0. License, insurance, applicable taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $699), PPSA and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. Every eligible contestant will win (subject to correctly answering a skill-testing question) an Instant Win prize consisting of a discount in an amount from $1,000 to $10,000 towards the purchase or lease of any new 2012 or 2013 Kia vehicle. One Grand Prize consisting of a $25,000 cheque will be randomly awarded from among all eligible contestants at the conclusion of the contest. No purchase necessary. Contest open to Canadian residents with a valid driver's license over the age of majority. Odds of winning vary by prize and by region. See kia.ca or your participating Kia dealer for complete contest rules. +0-weekly 5 nance payment (on approved credit) for new 2013 Sorento LX AT (SR75BD) based on a selling price of $28,667 is $157 with an APR of 1.49% for 60 months, amortized over an 84-month period. Estimated remaining principal balance of $8,053 plus applicable taxes due at end of 60-month period. Delivery and destination fees of $1,650. $1,000 Everybody Wins savings, $500 loan savings, other fees and certain levies (including tire levies) and A/C charge ($100, where applicable) are included. License, insurance, applicable taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $699), PPSA and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. See dealer for full details. $Loan savings for 2013 Sorento LX AT (SR75BD) is $500 and is available on purchase 5 nancing only on approved credit. Loan savings vary by model and trim and are deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes. Some conditions apply. Cash purchase price for 2013 Forte Sedan LX MT (FO540D)/2012 Rondo LX with AC (RN750C) is $14,022/$16,517 and includes a cash savings of $2,450/$5,250 (which is deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers). $1,000 Everybody Wins savings, delivery and destination fees of $1,455/$1,650, other fees and certain levies (including tire levies) and A/C charge ($100, where applicable). License, insurance, applicable taxes, variable dealer administration fees (up to $699), PPSA and registration fees are extra. Based on the Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price of $17,472/$22,767. Retailer may sell for less. Available at participating dealers. See dealer for full details. $$2,450/$5,250 cash savings on the cash purchase of an eligible new 2013 Forte Sedan LX MT (FO540D)/2012 Rondo LX with AC (RN750C) from a participating dealer between November 1 – November 30, 2012. Cash savings is deducted from the negotiated selling price before taxes and cannot be combined with special lease and finance offers. Some conditions apply. See your dealer for complete details. ‡Model shown Manufacturer Suggested Retail Price for 2013 Sorento 3.5L SX AWD (SR75XD)/2013 Forte SX Luxury AT (FO740D)/2012 Rondo EX V6 Luxury (RN75BC) is $43,045/$27,150/$26,945 and includes delivery and destination fees of $1,650/$1,455/$1,650 and A/C charge ($100, where applicable). License, insurance, applicable taxes, other fees and certain levies (including tire levies), variable dealer administration fees (up to $699), PPSA and registration fees are extra. Retailer may sell for less. Available at participating dealers. See dealer for full details. The First Time Vehicle Buyer Program offer is available on approved credit to eligible retail customers who finance a select new 2012/2013 Rio 4 door, 2012/2013 Rio 5 door, 2012/2013 Forte Sedan, 2012/2013 Forte5, 2012/2013 Forte Koup, or 2012/2013 Soul. Eligible purchase finance customers will receive a credit in the amount of five hundred dollars towards the purchase of their new vehicle. Some conditions apply. See your dealer for complete details. Offer ends January 2nd, 2013. ^The Bluetooth® word mark and logo are registered trademarks and are owned by Bluetooth SIG, Inc. Some conditions apply to the $500 Grad Rebate Program. See dealer or kia.ca for details. Information in this advertisement is believed to be accurate at the time of printing. For more information on our 5-year warranty coverage, vis kia.ca or call us at 1-877-542-2886. KIA is a trademark of Kia Motors Corporation and Kia Canada Inc. respectively.

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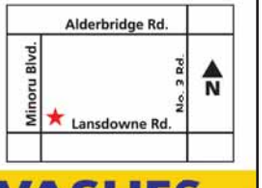

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Porsche Boxster

THE FINE LINES OF A PORSCHE

BOXSTER BOASTS AN EDGIER LOOK

For 2013, Porsche adds the brand new all-wheel-drive 911 Carrera 4 and 4S coupes and convertibles. And, of course, Porsche has been working on another convertible: The new 2013 Boxster. It's all-new despite appearing familiar with its mid-mounted engine and recognizable silhouette. But the numerous differences collectively add up to significant change.

Visually, the windshield is now more steeply raked and has been relocated forward of the cockpit by 10 centimetres, presumably for aerodynamic reasons and to keep your noggin a safe distance from the windshield edge when entering/exiting. The rest of the body is edgier, especially the deeply sculpted door panels, reshaped fenders and a rear deck with a prominent spoiler that give the Boxster a squared-up presence reminiscent of the Carrera GT supercar.

Porsche's designers also added about seven centimetres between the front and rear wheels for increased legroom, although overall length has increased only slightly. The cockpit has been re-engineered to a similar degree, with an all-new centre console, control panel and optional sport seats. An electronic parking lever replaces the traditional hand-brake control.

The Boxster's six-cylinder engine has been reduced in displacement to 2.7 litres from 2.9, however, the horsepower rating has increased to 265 from 255 primarily due to switching to direct injection (fuel squirted directly into the combustion chambers under high pressure).

Direct injection is also employed for the Boxster S's 3.4-litre six, only it also gets the same 315-horsepower rating. Both engines can be ordered with a six-speed manual transmission, or optional seven-speed twin-clutch automated manual gearbox called the PDK.

According to Porsche's stopwatch, the Boxster can hit 60 mph (96 km/h) from zero in 5.5 seconds, or 5.4 with the PDK (4.8 and 4.7 for the S).

Porsche's Sport Chrono package, available with the PDK, includes a launch-control program that maximizes standing-start acceleration, shaving about two-tenths of a second off the zero-to-60-mph (96 km/h) times of both models. PDK-equipped models also have a coasting feature whereby the engine idles out of gear when decelerating. *– wheelbasemedia.com*

BASE PRICES (INCLUDING DESTINATION)

911 Carrera: Coupe; $94,800
911 Carrera Cabriolet: coupe; $108,000
Boxster: Two-door roadster; $57,600
Cayman: Two-door coupe; $60,300
Panamera (left): Four-door sedan; $88,600

Porsche Cayman

Porsche 911 Cabriolet

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DL#8214

Audi TT-RS

NUMBERS ADD UP

MORE SPORTS MODELS FOR AUDI

With nearly every number slot now full, with the exception of "2" and "9," Audi has spent the off-season fattening up the individual portfolios with more detail and more sport models, designated by the letter "S" instead of the usual "A."

For 2013, there are new S6, S7 and S8 sedans, all powered by the new twin-turbocharged 4.0-litre V8. In most cases, the engine puts out 420 horsepower but in the case of the S8 — the largest sedan — it makes 520. Previously, to get that kind of power Audi relied on thirsty V10 engines, but that has all changed. Even the restyled S5 coupe and the base A8 sedan lose their V8 in favour of a supercharged V6 that actually feels stronger. Who knew that saving fuel could be so much fun?

Or being so small, for that matter. The quickest car in Audi's fleet is actually the tiny TT-RS, with a turbocharged five-cylinder engine that can sprint to 60 mph (96 km/h) from rest in 4.1 seconds. It, and all the S-badged cars, including the S5 coupe, come with the fantastic Quattro all-wheel-drive setup that directs power to wheels with grip if any others begin losing traction. In the case of the "S" cars, Quattro reduces the tendency to understeer (continue to travel in straight line even when the steering wheel is turned).

But where the new allroad is concerned, the advantage comes in the form of forward traction and not getting stuck somewhere you don't want to. The allroad designation returns following a seven-model-year absence with the same degree of go-anywhere all-wheel-drive Quattro swagger as before but with a mere 211-horsepower, 2.0-litre four-cylinder engine at its disposal. Previous allroads offered a base 250-horsepower turbo V6, or optional 300-horse V8.

The four-cylinder is hardly weak, though, as Audi states the A4-based allroad (replacing the 2012 A4 Avant wagon) will accelerate to 60 mph (90 km/h) from rest in 6.5 seconds, a full 1.2 seconds quicker than the V6 version circa 2005, and is 130 kilograms lighter to boot.

An eight-speed automatic transmission with manual-shift controls assists in reducing fuel consumption while maximizing performance. Physically, the cats-eye-style headlight lenses stand guard over one of Audi's more massive grilles and the darkened cladding extending along the sides and the lower portion of the rear bumper neatly contrasts with the body colour.

The allroad's 17-centimetre ground clearance is four centimetres more than the outgoing A4 Avant. Quattro directs 60 per cent of the available power to the rear wheels in normal driving situations. However, when conditions become nasty, up to 85 per cent can be deployed to the back wheels and up to 70 per cent to the fronts.

– wheelbasemedia.com

Audi R8

BASE PRICES (INCLUDING DESTINATION)

allroad: Compact wagon; $45,850
A3: Compact wagon; $34,850
A4: Mid-sized sedan; $38,550
A5: Mid-sized coupe; $47,650
A6: Mid-sized sedan; $53,250
A7: Full-sized hatchback/sedan: $69,950
A8: Full-sized sedan; $90,650
Q5: Full-sized sedan; $41,950
Q7: Full-sized sedan; $58,950
R8 Coupe (above): Two-door rocket ship; $134,850
TT: Coupe; $49,250; $52,350 (Roadster)

Audi A4

Audi A5

Audi A6

Audi A7

Audi S4

Audi S5 Cabriolet

Audi TT-RS Roadster

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MOVING FOUR-WARD

BMW M5

XXXXPHOTO-CREDITXXXX

MOST OF BMW'S CAR LINE ADOPTS TURBOCHARGED FOUR-CYLINDER AS BASE ENGINE

Pop quiz: What do the BMW X1, X3, Z4, 3 Series and 5 Series have in common? A 240-horsepower turbocharged four-cylinder as their base engine. Not that buyers ever came out chanting for four-cylinder power, but when BMW's fleet is staring at tougher fuel-economy regs, something had to be done.

The result is that the five aforementioned models can be had with turbocharged four-cylinder base engines. Interestingly, this doesn't seem to have affected (lowered) the prices of the cars much, if at all. The trend actually began with the 5 Series sedan and the Z4 and then spread. Oddly, the smallest car in the fleet — the 1 Series coupe and convertible — does not get the four-cylinder; just six-cylinder engines for them.

Of course, the X1 gets the four-cylinder and you could easily confuse it with BMW's existing X3, so similar is the physical resemblance. However, the tape measure confirms that the X1 is shorter and narrower by about 20 centimetres and 7.5 centimetres, respectively, and five centimetres shorter between the front and rear wheels. As well, the X3 offers nearly double the storage volume of the X1 with its rear seats up and close to 20 per cent more room with the X1's second-row 40:20:20 split rear seat folded flat.

However, the X1 certainly doesn't come up short in interior accommodations. The front seats feel wonderfully supportive, as they do with most BMWs, while rear-seat leg and knee room might only be a problem for tall types.

The X1 weighs 150 kilograms less than the X3, which is good news in terms of performance. BMW claims that zero-to-60 mph (96 km/h) takes about 6.3 seconds when equipped with the standard eight-speed automatic transmission. For those wanting more oomph, there is also an optional 3.0-litre turbocharged six-cylinder with 300 horsepower, which is new to Canada for 2013. The standard xDrive all-wheel-drive splits the torque equally between the front and rear wheels in normal driving, but can shift 100 per cent of the torque to whichever axle has the most grip. xDrive will also automatically direct added power to the rear wheels when turning to reduce the vehicle's tendency to continue in a straight line (called understeer).

To hold the starting price to less than $40,000, the base X1 is a bit on the stark side, devoid of leather seats, fancy interior/exterior trim and a number mechanical/safety features. Another new offering for the 2013 is much larger than the X1, but is no less unique. The idea of a luxury "coupe" has taken a beating in recent years from four-door cars like the Mercedes-Benz CLS, Audi A7 and Volkswagen CC. BMW is the latest manufacturer to hop on the bandwagon with the new 6 Gran Coupe, an enormous, elongated four-door that blends cues from the 6 Series Coupe and the less-expensive 5 Series sedan that it's based on. In fact, the 6 GC is 10 centimetres longer, four-centimetres wider but about 7.5 centimetres lower than the 5.

All three 6-ers — Coupe, Convertible and now Gran Coupe — fall into that rarefied category called "gorgeous" that few vehicles are able to truly attain. There are no four-cylinder engines in this group, just V8s. – *wheelbasemedia.com*

BASE PRICES (INCL. DESTINATION)

1 Series: Compact coupe: $38,000
1 Series: Compact convertible: $43,400
3 Series sedan: Compact sedan; $37,900
5 Series: Full-size sedan; $56,500
5 Series GT: Full-size hatchback; $72,400
6 Series Gran Coupe: Midi-sized sedan; $101,800
6 Series: Midi-sized coupe; $100,800

6 Series: Midi-sized convertible; $111,900
7 Series: Full-size sedan; $108,600
X1: Compact wagon (above); $38,900
Z4: Roadster: $56,300

BMW 1 Series Coupe

BMW 5 Series Sedan

BMW 7 Series

BMW Z4 Roadster

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Lindsay Lohan. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Lohan regrets nothing, could be facing more jail time

Lindsay Lohan has no regrets, she insists, despite the legal and family problems that have plagued her and impacted her career.

"I want to be known as an actress, not a troubled starlet," Lohan tells Us Weekly during a lengthy sit-down interview.

"(I regret) nothing, because then I wouldn't have been able to cry in scenes at the drop of a hat. I have a tattoo, Live without regrets. I'm not saying I wanted to go to a jail cell, but I've drawn from it."

Well, she might have even more to draw from soon.

It looks like she'll have her probation revoked for lying to police after a summer fender-bender, according to TMZ, and that could lead to more jail time for Lohan.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Rihanna finally makes appearance on 777-tour

THE WORD
Katarina Matsson
scene@metronews.ca

Rihanna's 777 Tour has taken its toll on journalists and fans who followed the star around the globe.

After a week, their frustration exploded. Constant delays and lack of sleep (those on board had to crash whenever and wherever they had a chance: on coaches, on board the plane or on a floor) and not knowing when the next opportunity to eat and drink would materialize, are circumstances most would endure with joy — if only the main subject of the whole trip would show herself offstage.

After mounting criticism spread like a wildfire online — that's the risk you take when you invite 150 journalists — Rihanna yesterday showed herself on the plane.

Wearing dark sunglasses, she appeared 10 minutes before the plane was due to land after the last leg. She even came close to offering an apology.

"I didn't get to spend as much time as I'd originally planned with you guys. I think you are tired as well, but I wanna now improve so I'm gonna come and sit here with you guys. And thank you everybody for making this trip the s—t," she told the journalists.

What was the hardest part of the tour?
The hardest part? I guess trying to balance being a hostess and a performer. I'm supposed to do my show and then shut the f—k up until the next show. Because the two hours we have to fly that's when I can sleep, but I really wanted to hang out and interact with everybody and give everybody my time. So I guess that was difficult.

Rihanna, can you sum up the tour for us?
Rock and roll, true friends, press who really want to know the dirt, rarely got any dirt cause I had to be good. I had to be good this time. We would have had a 333 tour if I wasn't good. I wouldn't have lasted. I still sound like s—t right now, but tonight is the last s—t so we are going all the way. No mercy, that's what I mean. I'm gonna put all my energy into this one show.

Twitter

@tyrabanks
Remember ladies: U don't need a KING to be a QUEEN!

@Pink
Wait til ya'll see how much weight I can gain in one meal

@ElizabethHurley
How many of my female followers wear skirts/dresses by day? Press events aside, I wear jeans or pants every day without exception #curious

@SarahKSilverman
Trying to feel okay about picking up my tofurky thanksgiving meal for 1

Justin Bieber

Oprah dishes out dating advice for Justin Bieber

While Justin Bieber may still be making attempts to win back ex-girlfriend Selena Gomez, at least one influential personality thinks he should cool it — and maybe revise his previously stated plans to be married by 25, too.

"I think 25 is too young, actually, I really do — particularly for you," Oprah Winfrey told Bieber during a one-on-one interview with the superstar.

"Your whole 20s is about discovering who you really are. You owe that to yourself, particularly because of the business that you're in (where there's) not a lot of self-discovery time because so much is already defined for you."

In other news, prosecutors decided not to file any charges against Bieber after investigators found no evidence that the pop star had kicked and punched a photographer after leaving a movie theatre last month, a document obtained Wednesday states.

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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

A la mode in many ways: The black short-sleeved dress from H&M ($49.95) on the left is seen accompanied respectively by a Vince fur vest from Holt Renfrew ($1,975), grey cardigan from Topshop at the Bay ($100) and a black jacket with faux-leather sleeves from Dynamite ($49.90). AARON VINCENT ELKAIM / THE CANADIAN PRESS

A dress fit for four fêtes

Deck the holidays. No need to break the bank on several new outfits as you navigate the social circuit this season

Whether you're heading to cocktails, the office bash or a family gathering, a few fashionable additions can add some oomph to your festive wardrobe.

"As much as we know that we've got lots of different parties on our calendar for the holidays, we don't always have to necessarily buy four different outfits," said Julia Cyboran, editor-in-chief of Loulou magazine. "It's all about how you style one main piece."

THE STAPLE PIECE

Cyboran said the little black dress is the wardrobe essential for any holiday look. That's likely music to the ears of cost-conscious fashionistas who may already have an LBD tucked away in their closet or are able to scout out a new, affordable option.

The seemingly season-less style staple has a chameleon-like ability to transform from upscale chic to laid back casual.

Selecting the right style with its own intricate details such as pleating, embellished sleeves and a flattering silhouette can ensure it can work as a stand-alone garment, Cyboran noted.

Going for glam

Looking to add a little luxe to your holiday look? Cyboran said teaming your dress with a faux fur topper along with some shimmering sequined booties can instantly infuse a glam touch.

Comfort casual

Heading to cottage country or settling in at home for a more low-key holiday celebration? Cyboran suggests taking a robust, comfy warm knit worn with a belt over the dress, along with a pair of slouchy, low-cut boots for a more casual ensemble.

Office party chic

If you're pressed for time and need to make a wardrobe quick-change for the office shindig, Cyboran said a blazer with faux leather detailing partnered with a pair of pumps can easily help translate your outfit for after-hours.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bling it on

Trying to select several eye-catching add-ons to amp up your party attire?

- **Step in style.** In the case of those seeking a little lift, Julia Cyboran said the pointy-toed pump that dominated the fashion runways is emerging as a standout on the market.
- **In the bag.** Cyboran said the solid, structured pillbox clutch will remain a style standout for the holidays, but expect to see envelope clutches in the hands of women heading out on the town.
- **Making a statement.** Bigger is better when it comes to statement jewelry, with large-scale earrings and necklaces among the holiday accessory offerings. While rose gold hit the market last spring, Cyboran said it started to surface a little last winter in watches, belts and earrings, as did chocolate-coloured gold, and both colours have remained a part of the accessory landscape.

Julia Cyboran, editor-in-chief of Loulou magazine, selected this black-and-gold clutch from BCBG ($190), and Envelope clutch from Forever 21 ($19.80) to highlight the season's key trends. AARON VINCENT ELKAIM/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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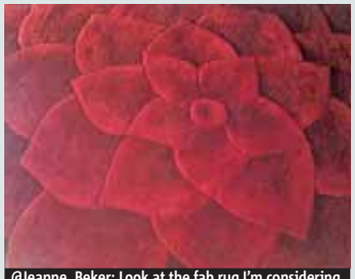
@Jeanne_Beker: Our lovely @EDITbyJeanneB models for @AdditionElle

@Jeanne_Beker: With the bold+beautiful plus-size bloggers @AddionElls launch of @EDITbyJeanneB



@Jeanne_Beker: Look at the fab rug I'm considering at @AngloOriental http://www.anglo-oriental.com

@Jeanne_Beker: Rob Lowe, hosting @pgawards just butchered my name. But hey, he's damn cute.

The Kit

Canadian street style

Spotted in: Vancouver

Michelle Yu
Stylist at Holt Renfrew
Age: 28

What she's wearing
Gifted flannel jacket, Proenza Schouler bag, Alden Ray and Birds of a Feather accessories, River Island skirt, Michael Kors Boots, Club Monaco socks

Her inspiration
"Cold weather and this warm flannel jacket I stole from my little brother."

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MARKET IN FAVOUR OF BUYERS

Despite a global recession and tentative recovery, Vancouver remains one of the hottest, yet most expensive real estate markets in Canada.

It comes with the territory for a city on the international stage, according to Eugen Klein, president of the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV). He points to its ranking as one of the world's best cities to live in, plus hosting the Olympics and Expo, as reasons why Vancouver commands such high real estate prices — close to $1 million for a detached home.

The numbers are heading south though, with housing prices dipping in all parts of town. Statistics from the REBGV show a decline of six to eight per cent for the price of a detached home in West Vancouver and Richmond. Other areas of the city, including Burnaby, New Westminster, North Vancouver and East Vancouver, have held steady.

The most stable purchase for new homebuyers remains apartment condos and townhouses, which average between $365,000 and $465,000 in all areas of the city, only dropping 2.9 per cent in value. Klein is encouraged by a slight increase in first-time buyers, who tend to enter the market in attached properties and then push sellers into the move-up market and detached homes.

"Sellers have reigned supreme in Vancouver for many years, so it's good to see the change," Klein says.

REBGV president-elect Sandra Wyant, agrees.

"Overall conditions in today's market remain in favour of buyers, with low interest rates, more choice, and less time pressure in terms of decision-making. This translates into a calmer atmosphere for those looking to buy a home and it places more onus on sellers to ensure their homes are priced to compete in today's marketplace."

Some of the stall in sales is also due to the change in mortgage policies, which recently moved back to 25-year amortization periods from longer payment terms.

Still, Klein sees Vancouver as a healthy real estate market, with less foreign investment than other cities.

"There's positive job creation, and many part-time jobs moving to full time. If you bought a home in 2005, you've lived out a recession and still have great equity in your home."

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BUZZBUZZHOME Vancouver's biggest list of new build homes.

BUILDING COMMUNITIES

SOLO DISTRICT, APPIA'S LATEST PROJECT, TRULY A MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT

As Canadians choose to have fewer children, couples are looking to condos as the next family home. But as any parent knows, children need more than just a high-rise condo — they need a neighbourhood.

That's why Appia Developments isn't just raising towers, it's building a community.

The company's latest project, SOLO District at Lougheed Highway and Willingdon Avenue in North Burnaby, is a truly mixed-used development.

When it's completed, the 6.5-acre superstructure will boast a diverse range of retail outlets and office spaces at its base and 1,400 residential units above. All the amenities will be housed in four towers, the tallest being 55 storeys, connected by broad pedestrian walkways and luscious green spaces.

"The project, when it's built ... will be very pedestrian-friendly," says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager for Appia Developments.

Appia plans to build the property so residents can satisfy all their daily living requirements on site. SOLO homeowners can mix and mingle on the buildings' rooftop gardens and party rooms, they can work out at the fitness studios, and do their grocery shopping at Burnaby's first Whole Foods Market. Residents of the first tower, STRATUS, can walk their dogs in a fenced-in exercise area.

"It has the ability to be a completely self-contained community," says Murrell. "You can live, work, shop without ever having to get into your car."

However, for those who prefer to get around by transit, SOLO District is just a short jaunt from the Brentwood Town Centre Milennium Skytrain station, which can take passengers downtown in about 25 minutes. Each tower will also have its own car share program and electric vehicle outlets for the green-minded driver.

Murrell says families are already attracted to the new Appia homes, as demonstrated by the popularity of SOLO's two-bedroom units at the Lougheed Highway and Willingdon Avenue showroom. The suites offer spacious bed, living and dining rooms for lively children.

GREENING NORTH BURNABY

As any developer knows, location is key for a successful project. So when Appia Developments founder Jim Bosa considered the site of his next venture, the SOLO District, he couldn't think of a better place than his home town: North Burnaby.

Nestled between the mountains to the east and downtown Vancouver to the west, North Burnaby is renowned for its serene views, its excellent shopping, and its strong community vibe.

"The people who live in North Burnaby absolutely love North Burnaby. We don't find it to be as congested as, other parts of the lower mainland," says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager for Appia Developments.

With its SOLO District, which will be comprised of four mixed-used towers on 6.5 acres, Appia is looking to compound North Burnaby's inherent attributes with sustainable development.

The project will work picnic areas, a geothermal heating and cooling system, green transportation options and a pedestrian friendly public market into its sleek units, which range from studios to three-bedroom and den condos.

Moreover, Appia hopes its vast array of amenities, its car-share program and its close proximity to the Brentwood Skytrain station will reduce residences' dependency on gas-powered vehicles. Buyers will not only enjoy a home that is comfortable and spacious, but one that is situated next to retail outlets, restaurants, fitness centres, rapid transit and grocery stores such as Whole Foods Market.

"We're trying to show people that you don't have to be downtown to be urban," says Murrell.

Not only is SOLO District a green choice, it's also an economical one. Due to the popularity of the congested Metrotown area, SOLO District's location at Lougheed Highway and Willingdon Avenue is one of the more open areas of Burnaby.

Murrell says it's now North Burnaby's time to shine, and before the secret is out, it allows buyers and investors to get more quality square footage for their buck. And as the community grows, property values will only increase.

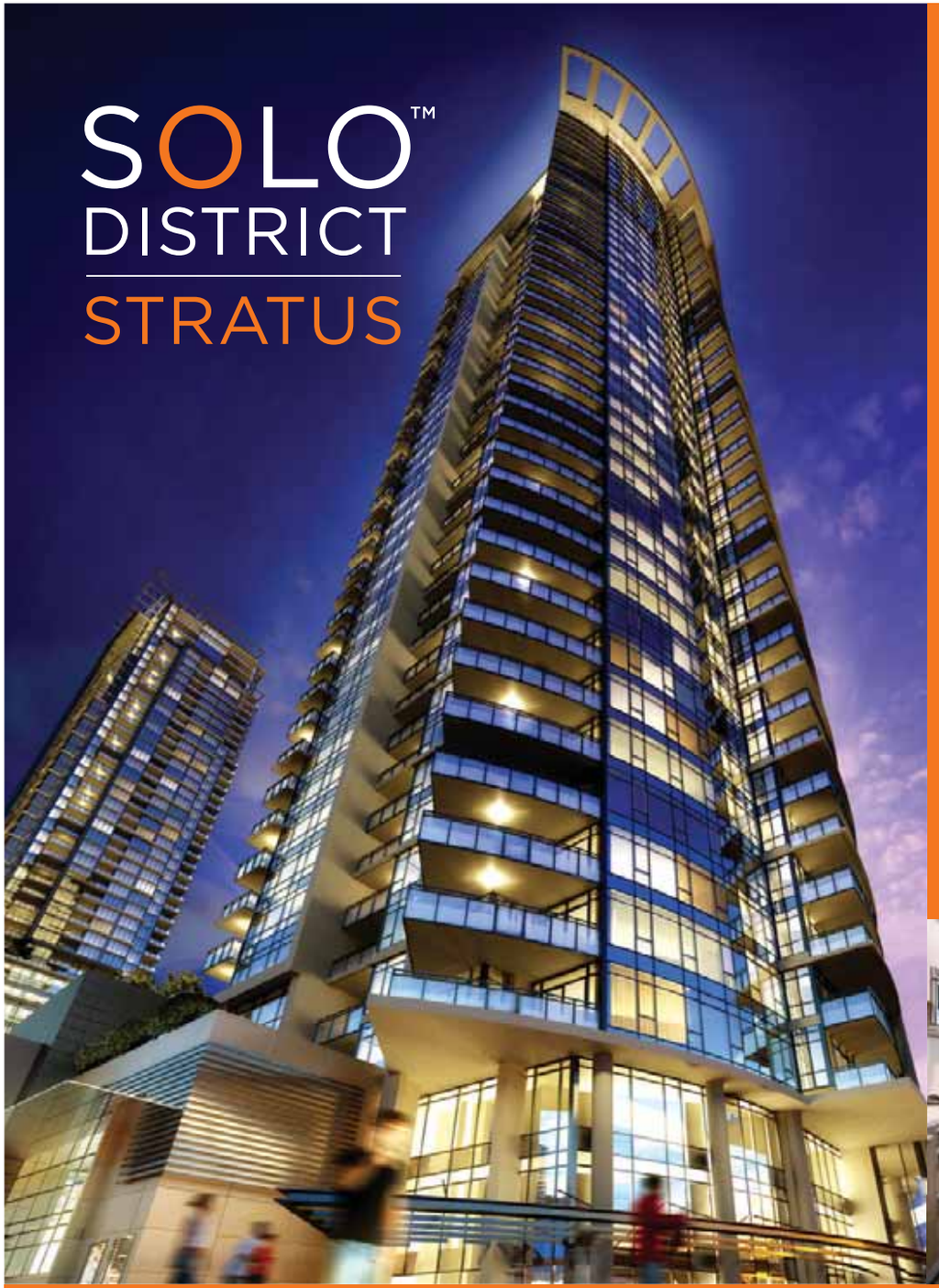
"It's essentially almost being revitalized," she says, pointing to new developments like SOLO District and plans for the Brentwood Mall to be revamped. " You're seeing a lot of positive change in North Burnaby and it really is a planned change."

THE EFFECT OF WHOLE FOODS

One of the most outstanding features of SOLO District is its anchor retailer, Burnaby's first Whole Foods Market. The organic supermarket chain, which is set to open in 2015, does more than just support a healthy, sustainable lifestyle — it increases property values. Investors know this as the Whole Foods Effect, which states that wherever Whole Foods sets up shop, urbanites — with a taste for a healthy, vibrant living and the income to support it — will follow.

"It (Whole Foods) tends to draw people in and enrich property values," says Lisa Murrell, sales and marketing manager for Appia Development.

The Washington, D.C., suburb of Logan Circle was once rife with crime. But when a local lobby group convinced Whole Foods to open there in 2000, the area was transformed into a highly prized neighbourhood, according to a National Public Radio story.



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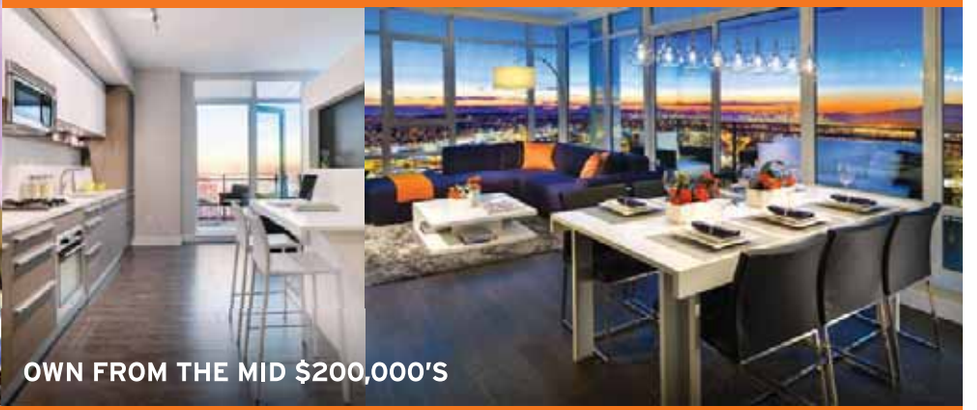

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GOING GREEN

MC² DESIGNED FOR ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS BUYERS

As Vancouver works to become the world's greenest city by 2020, Intracorp Projects is building greener developments for an increasingly urban lifestyle.

From its highly functional suites and garden plots, to its proximity to public transit and shopping, the company's latest development, MC², is designed to fit the changing demands of environmentally conscious buyers.

"As much as people ask, how good is my view, how big is my suite, how much is the price, they want lifestyle accommodation," says Tracie McTavish, president of Rennie Marketing Systems, the marketing company for MC².

One of the most important factors in living an urban lifestyle is ready access to transit. Currently, only about 40 per cent of all trips taken in Metro Vancouver are car-free, but the city aspires to have two thirds of its citizens on bikes, foot or transit by the year 2040.

MC²'s two 24- and 31-storey towers neighbour the Marine Drive Canada Line Sky Train Station. From there, residents can reach Waterfront Station in less than 20 minutes, and the Vancouver International Airport (YVR) in less than 10 minutes.

Intracorp's prime location on Marine Drive and Cambie reduces the need for a car, so they've limited the number of parking spaces in the buildings to 75 per 100 suites.

"In some cases, people say I don't need a car, and that's huge savings," says McTavish.

However, McTavish says as much as green is very important in all our lives, the consumer has yet to pay for it.

"They want it and it makes them feel good, but they don't necessarily want to pay a premium for it," McTavish says.

So Intracorp worked with renowned Vancouver architect James Cheng to design luxury condos in small spaces.

"We're talking one bedrooms at 500 square feet that function at a very high level and two bedrooms two bathrooms that function again at a very high level," says McTavish.

And with prices starting at $259,000, they're affordable, too.

"Whether they're willing to pay for (green living) or not, you (the developer) have an obligation morally or otherwise to provide it, because that's where the market is going," said McTavish.

The presentation centre is located at 8160 Cambie St. (at Marine Drive) and is open daily from noon to 5 p.m., closed Fridays or by appointment. For more, go to mc2living.com.

VANCOUVER'S HIDDEN BOOM

Housing prices may have dropped in parts of Metro Vancouver, but for MC2's sales team, the market is booming.

When Intracorp Projects launched its development at Marine Drive and Cambie Street, it sold 80 per cent of the suites in just one day.

Tracie McTavish, president of Rennie Marketing Systems, said commentators on the real estate industry tend to paint a negative picture of the housing market, but the numbers speak for themselves.

Nearly three weeks after its launch on Oct. 27, less than 100 of MC²'s 443 suites remain unsold.

McTavish points to a number of factors that make the condos attractive to buyers, such as the green spaces, the sleek design by architect James Cheng and the close proximity to the Marine Drive Canada Line Station. The price point is also a hit with prospective buyers, with 230 suites in the 24- and 31-storey towers under $350,000.

THE LIFE OF THE CAMBIE CORRIDOR

For years, Marpole's residents have spoken of their community as Metro Vancouver's "hidden jewel." But if Intracorp Projects has its way, the south Vancouver municipality won't remain unknown for long.

Its MC² development — named after its Marine Drive and Cambie Street location, with a play on Einstein's theory of relativity, e=mc² — is offering up 443 one- and two-bedroom suites for sale in its two 24- and 31-storey towers.

About 350 of the suites have already sold since its launch in late October, when 80 per cent of the suites were snapped up in a day. And Tracie McTavish, president of Rennie Marketing Systems, which is marketing MC² for Intracorp, expects development in the neighbourhood to increase along with interest in the project.

"I would say in the next five years you're going to see a dramatic shift as these buildings complete, people move in and the neighbourhood evolves very quickly," he said.

As part of its Cambie Corridor plan, Vancouver is encouraging commercial development along the thoroughfare. McTavish says the Marine and Cambie intersection is prize territory for retail and entertainment ventures to set up shop.

"That will be the focal point of Cambie once you come away from the downtown core," he said. "It's got enough density, it's got enough transportation and it's got enough retail in its entirety of the four corners to meet most of residents' needs."

For its part, Intracorp is working to build up the area into a hot spot for urban living by including a putting green, garden plots, Zen gardens, common lounge areas and fitness clubs. And next year, visual artist Douglas Coupland will unveil a new work of public art at the site.

Amenities such as these are increasingly important for homeowners who purchase smaller condos. As their apartments decrease inside, residents are spending more time outside the home in common spaces.

40 HOMES AVAILABLE UNDER $299K

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INTRODUCING THE ROLSTON

NEW DEVELOPMENT HAS DISTINCTIVE STYLING, LOOK

Meet The Rolston. With red exterior styling, this new development by Rize Alliance Properties is hardly a wallflower.

Rize is all about defining a distinctive personality for each of its developments, said Karen Hoff, project manager with Pilothouse Real Estate, the company marketing Rolston.

"Rize projects contribute personality to the neighbourhoods they're part of, enhancing the unique character of each locale," she said.

The personality starts on the outside. The 27-floor building's oversized balconies and distinctive styling give it a playful, modern look meant to appeal to the development's target demographic — adventurous urbanites who like something a little different, said Hoff.

Located at 1300 Granville St., off Davie Street downtown, Rolston has a visual personality that fits right in with the neighbourhood.

Available condos range in price from $349,900 to $619,900. The 187 one-bedroom and two-bedroom homes span from 516 to 978 square feet.

Inside, Rolston homes have just as much personality, with sleek modern design in four high-impact colour palettes, including light grey or white quartz countertops, cabinets in a soft latte or high-gloss grey or white, high-end laminate flooring in grey, taupe or mocha, and a glass tile kitchen backsplash in clear, teal, black or orange.

All units are equipped with stainless-steel Whirlpool appliances and an in-suite washer and dryer.

The modern design also extends to the bathroom, which has white subway wall tiles and large one-by-two-foot porcelain floor tiles, a big soaker tub and dual-flush toilets.

One of the best features of Rolston is the impressive built-in storage and cabinetry available in each home.

Currently under construction, Rolston will be move-in ready for summer 2013.

Visittherolston.com or in person at the Rolston Sales Centre at #140 – 1265 Granville St.

RIZE ALLIANCE

There's something different about Rize Alliance and its developments. The Vancouver-based real estate development company was formed in 1991 by William Lin with the purpose of injecting Vancouver's urban development scene with positivity and originality.

Since then, they've taken on commercial and residential developments, designed and built with intelligence, each adding to their neighbourhoods.

"Rize developments have flair and Rolston is no exception," says Brent Beatson, development manager.

With Rolston, Rize is reprising their role restoring and incorporating a heritage site (in this case, the old hotel) alongside a new high-density residential building, while keeping the heritage building and its flavour intact. Rize first did this with the Vancouver Linen Building on Richards Street, which now houses a Choices Market.

"We value preserving our history, but also need to accommodate growth. Rolston achieves both, helping to make Vancouver a vibrant, world-class city," says Beatson.

MODERN DESIGN PLAYS ON AREA'S HISTORY

Connected to The Yale, a heritage R&B bar being restored by Rize as part of its development commitment, Rolston's modern design plays on the area's colourful history, while still keeping it proudly intact.

Since it's at the tail end of the vibrant Granville Strip, Rolston provides the perfect proximity to the downtown entertainment district — it's a little beyond it, but still just a few minutes' walk from some of Vancouver's best restaurants, stores and nightlife.

"Rize wanted to build energy and fun into Rolston from the get-go," said Karen Hoff with Pilothouse Real Estate, Rolston's marketing partner.

Residents will find it easy to get around on foot and public transit. Rolston is located just two blocks from the sea wall and one block from George Wainborn Park. Public transportation is right outside the building.

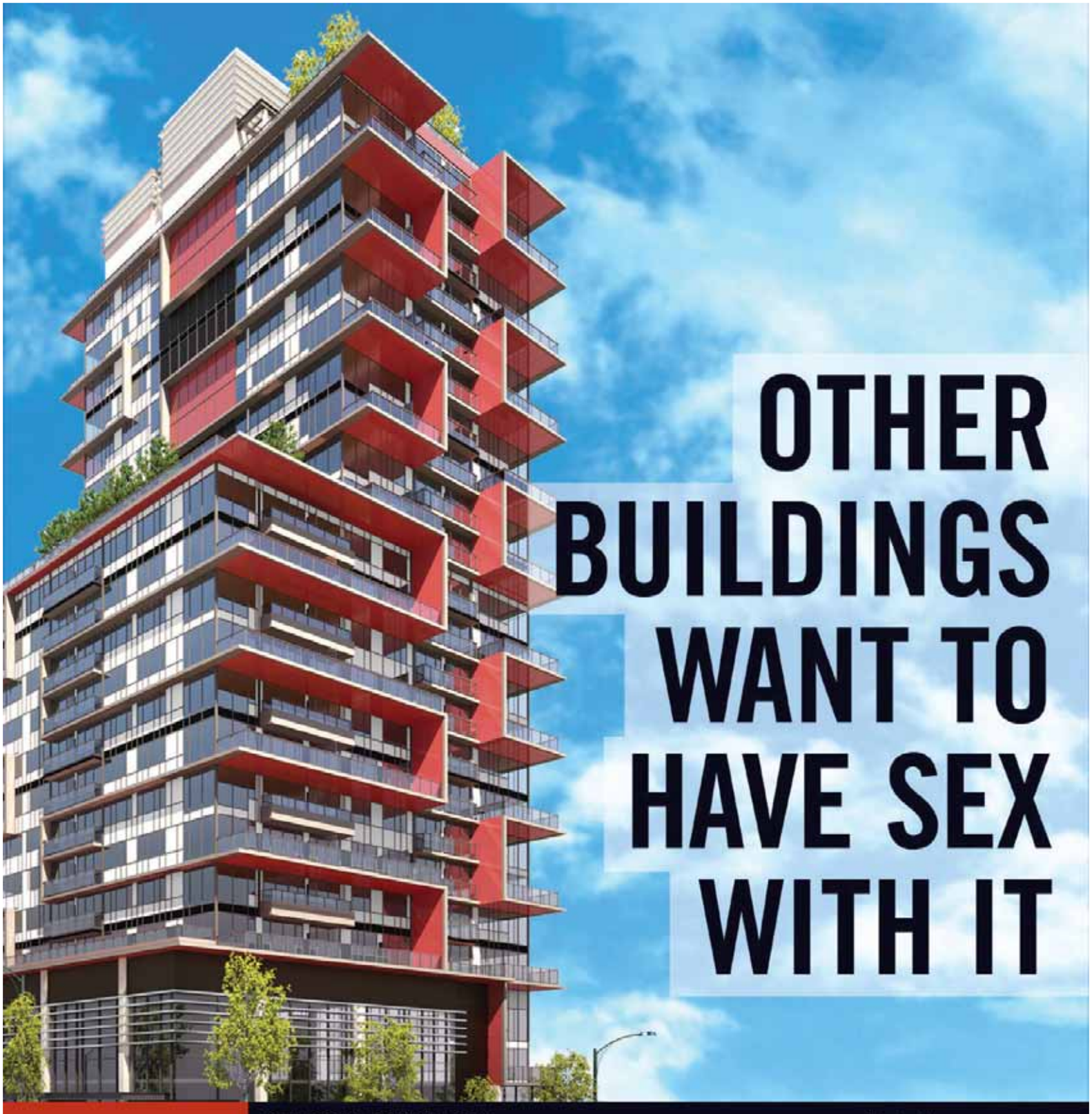
Choices Market offers high-quality grocery shopping only three blocks away, and Granville Street itself offers a range of retailers, including food, clothing and entertainment.

There are many neighbourhood hotspots for entertainment, but residents don't necessarily need to leave the building to get social and experience a change of scenery. Rolston's two shared outdoor spaces, The Terrace and The Gardens, provide plenty of space for its residents to mingle and relax.

The Terrace is a large open outdoor space on the 16th floor that includes greenery, seating and a barbecue area.

On Rolston's roof, 290 feet above the Pacific, residents can enjoy a similar experience, with panoramic views and lots of amenities in the 4,000 square foot space. The Gardens, as the rooftop area is known, are equipped with a children's play area, a rooftop barbecue bar where residents can host get-togethers, and an urban agricultural plot for residents with a passion for gardening.

When the party moves indoors, the development's amenity space includes a fully equipped fitness centre and a common room, including a kitchen.



ROLSTON

STARTING AT $349,900.

It's a rarity that a building can evoke an emotion... let alone entice other buildings. Perhaps it's the Rolston's confidence in self expression, its true combination of form and function or its seductive architecture... whatever it is, you have to admit, this is one sexy building. Beauty can often be only skin deep, however the Rolston's interiors are sexy as well!

Come in to our new presentation centre and see why Rolston is so attractive to home owners that are ready for something bold... and aren't afraid to admit it.

THEROLSTON.COM

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AFFORDABLE HOMES

FOR THE WHOLE COMMUNITY IN GATEWAY DISTRICT

The new mini suites set for construction in Surrey City Centre's Gateway district are not only cute, they're making home ownership possible.

At 290 square feet — slightly larger than a typical parking space — the smallest of the 56 units in the proposed Balance building will be the tiniest condos in Canada, and among the most affordable.

Because they are so small, Surrey-based developer Tien Sher can price the units at a point attainable to the community's retail workers, single people and even young couples. With price tags starting at $109,900, anyone who makes $17 an hour and has $6,000 for a down payment could afford to live in the Balance building. Moreover, with amenities and the Surrey's Gateway Skytrain Station just steps away, the micro-condo dwellers can forgo purchasing a car.

Tien Sher decided to build the affordable units after watching a lot of working class people come into their Quattro 1 and 2 showrooms.

"We keep a very close tab on who is coming, how they are coming in, how they are finding out about us," said Charan Sethi, Tien Sher president. "It occurred to me that there's so many people coming into our sales centre who are working class ... that they would not be able to satisfy the financial requirements."

As a former working-class man himself, Sethi felt it was imperative his company supply affordable housing for the broader community.

"I have worked in the factories, I have sold in the flea market, I know what it's like not to be able to own a home," he said. "And when you get your first home, no matter what it is, it's your own roof."

Since Tien Sher announced plans to build the project in October, the demand for the micro units has been extraordinary.

Although Balance isn't expected to launch until late January 2013, there are already twice as many registered to buy into the project than there are units.

LOCAL INSPIRATION

As soon as Tien Sher realized its aim was to build smaller condos, it searched the globe for inspiration. The perfect case study was right in its backyard.

In 2010, the Burns Block in Vancouver's historic Gastown transformed a single-residency occupancy hotel into 30 streamlined "micro-units," between 226 and 291 square feet.

Tien Sher compounded the micro unit idea with other concepts garnered from its research "to see how we can make them (the micro units) affordable, yet very livable," said Charan Sethi, Tien Sher president.

Developers across North America are now looking to the project as a model for compact living.

"Other cities are anxiously waiting to see what happens with our project," he said.

BALANCE CONDOS SET TO BE A HIT WITH YOUNG BUYERS

As the square footage of new condo units shrinks, apartment dwellers are spreading out into their communities, using cafes as their computer desks, restaurants as their dining tables and bars as their living rooms.

This urban lifestyle has been animating neighbourhoods like Yaletown and Kitsilano for years. And now, Surrey-based Tien Sher hopes its new micro condos will do the same for Metro Vancouver's fastest-growing municipality.

Tien Sher's affordable new 56-unit development, Balance, will see Canada's smallest condos going up in Surrey's Gateway district, just a seven minute walk from the Gateway Skytrain Station. The suites, which are between 290 and 653 square feet, are expected to be a hit with younger buyers who are more interested in strolling their local promenades than spending time in their homes.

"That's what these young people are all about," said Charan Sethi, Tien Sher president. "They basically have a home to sleep in and do some work. They live outside their apartment. They live in restaurants they live in coffee shops where they meet and mingle with other people in common areas."

The name of the proposed development, Balance, reflects the lifestyle of this new demographic of home buyer. Sethi said he got the idea for the title from his own daughter, who explained how the micro condos can fit in to a balanced life.

"She said, 'What we (Generation Y) like to do is live a full life. We like to work hard, we like to play hard and when we go home we don't need that much space. We go home to a nice comfortable place and we're happy,'" said Sethi.

Sethi says it will not be long before micro condos start popping up near other transportation hubs in Metro Vancouver.

"If you have got a good transportation system close by and other social gathering places available these (micro condos) will be successful," he said.

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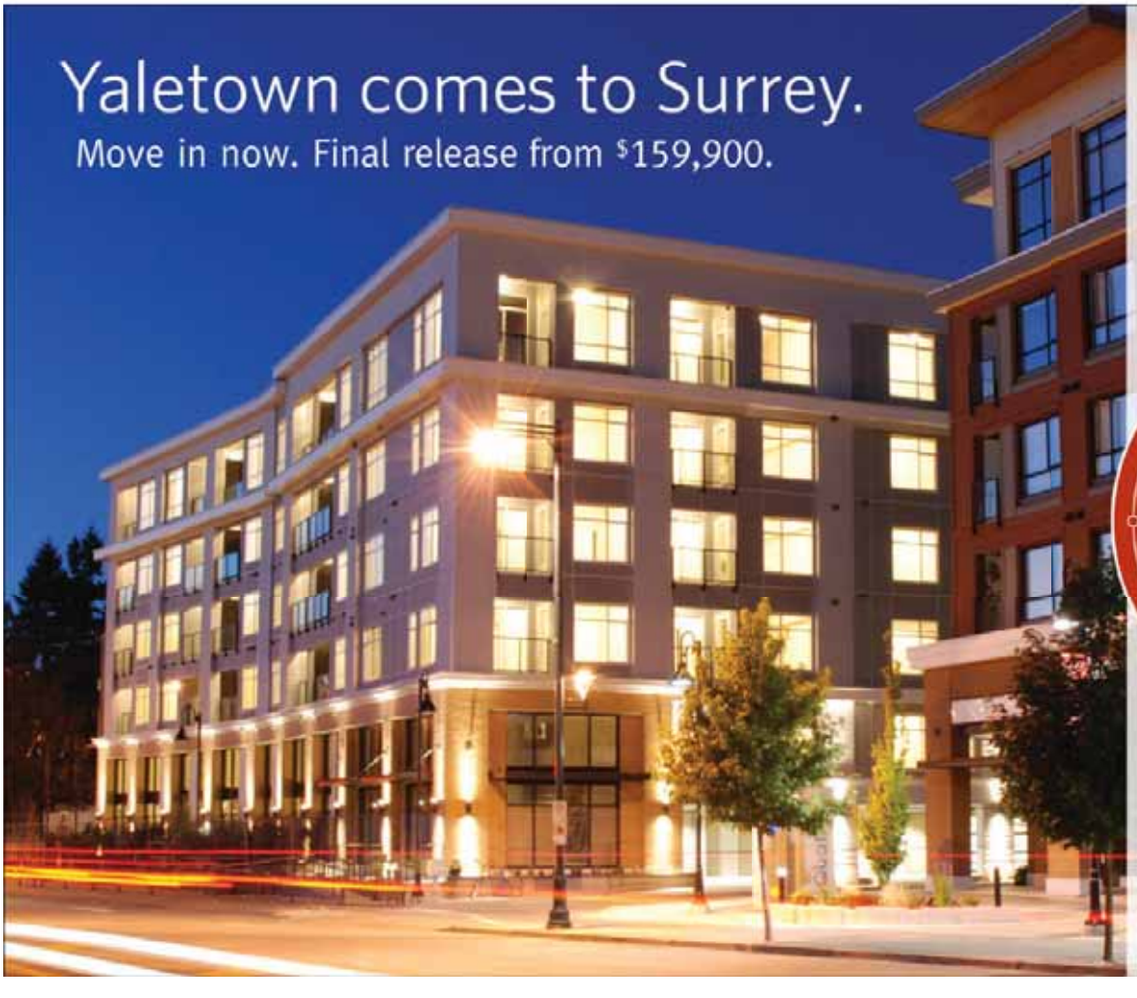

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ELLIOT STREET SETS NEW STANDARD

PROJECT ONE OF THE MOST AFFORDABLE OPTIONS IN NEW WESTMINSTER

The pace of development in New Westminster continues to increase and Elliot Street is leading the way. Elliot Street is a 130-unit, 19-storey concrete building a few blocks from the Fraser River in the city that once served as the provincial capital. With studio homes starting at $159,900, it is one of the most affordable options in the Lower Mainland.

"From the outset, our strategy has been to create something that will appeal to downsizers and to locals," says Peter Censorio, president of the Censorio Group of Companies, the development firm behind Elliot Street.

Slated for occupancy in the spring of 2015, Elliot Street offers a mix of one- and two-bedroom units and ground-level townhomes. A short walk from the SkyTrain's Columbia Street station, the development is designed for casual living. Units feature open-space designs with walk-in closets in the bedrooms.

Kitchens are equipped with fully integrated, top-quality, Energy Star-rated, stainless-steel appliances: Bertazzoni gas cooktops and wall ovens, Faber under-cabinet slide-out hood fans, Blomberg bottom-freezer refrigerators, and Panasonic inverter microwaves. Built-in Dacor espresso makers are optional, although each unit comes with an EnergyStar-rated Blomberg washing machine and vented dryer. Quartz countertops with white tile backsplash and combination soft-close and touch-latch cabinetry provide a modern, clean look. The building offers impressive views: five units on each floor look south over the Fraser River and the Pattulo and SkyTrain bridges, while two units on each floor look toward the North Shore Mountains. A public walkway, built by the developer, connects the building to Albert Crescent Park.

Designed by award-winning GBL Architects, with interiors by i3 Design, Elliot Street features classic materials in a modern form to strike the perfect balance of style, comfort and function.

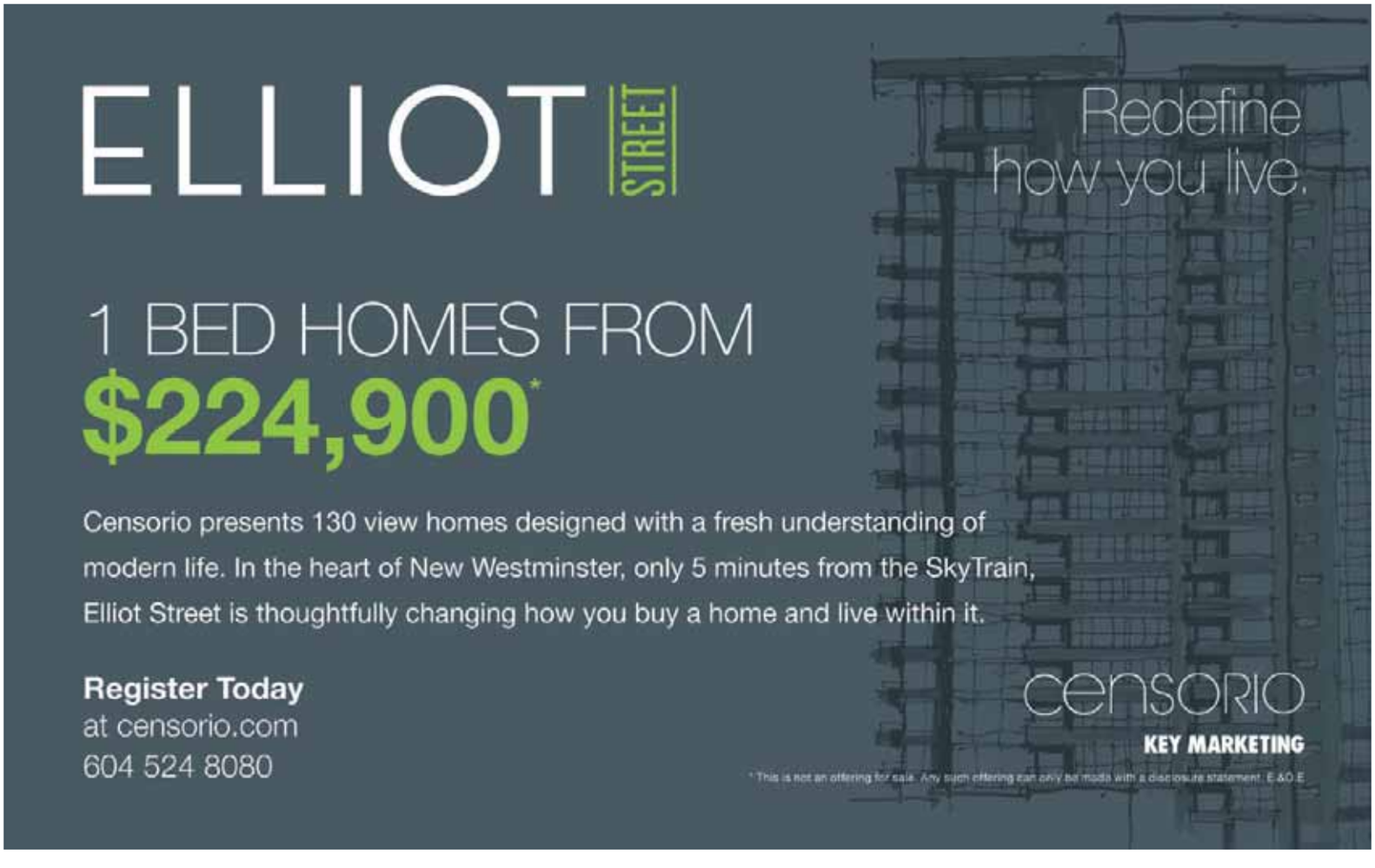
"Design is more than great materials," says Peter Censorio.

"It's a holistic understanding of how they work together."

One feature that's bound to appeal to younger buyers is a new software system called Bazinga, a web-based application with all of the information and notifications a condo owner could ever need. The system includes appliance manuals and building maintenance schedules along with updates on meetings and social events.

ABOUT CENSORIO

For nearly two decades, Peter Censorio rose through the ranks at some of Vancouver's most-recognized development firms. When he decided to start his own company, Censorio assembled a team of experienced specialists who share a collaborative attitude and an unconventional approach to building and design.



CREATIVE, SUSTAINABLE URBAN LIVING EVAN'S FOCUS

DEVELOPMENT REFLECTS AREA'S UNIQUE CHARACTER

GRECI GROUP

Founded by Carlo Meola, a Vancouver developer with more than 20 years' experience, the Greci Group is driven by its passion for detail and love of exceptional architecture and design. The Evan project marks an important milestone for Greci, as it represents the company's largest multi-unit residential building.

A new development captures the essence of Mount Pleasant, an up-and-coming Vancouver neighbourhood. To reflect and build upon the region's reputation as an artist's haven, EVAN's amenities include a studio equipped with high-voltage wiring and a gallery for exhibits and gatherings.

"Our concept for the building is affordably creative, modern and sustainable urban living," says Carlo Meola, president of Greci Group, the developer behind EVAN. "The building accommodates the neighbourhood's unique lifestyle."

When completed in 2014, EVAN will be a six-storey, concrete building offering wonderful views of the North Shore mountains and downtown Vancouver. Comprised of one-, two- and three-bedroom units and three artist's studios, EVAN is affordable: 90 per cent of its 55 units are priced at less than $325,900.

To keep prices down, EVAN adopts a practical, creative approach to design in relatively modest spaces (one-bedroom units range between 440-515 square feet). Over-height ceilings and either a balcony or patio maximize natural light and create a sense of space. There is also fob-controlled underground parking, well-lit bike rooms and additional storage space.

Bathrooms feature polished chrome accessories, contemporary soaker tubs with single-lever pressure-balanced shower controllers and high-efficiency, water-conserving toilets. A four-inch backsplash offsets the bathroom's sleek composite counters, while doors and drawers feature soft-closing stainless-steel hardware. Linear European-style kitchens include integrated or stainless-steel appliances and durable quartz-composite countertops, while wide-plank laminate flooring extends through the living, dining and bedroom areas.

Designed by award-winning Shift Architecture, the building features integrated indoor and outdoor amenity space, along with a common courtyard. EVAN's location is ideal: Near Emily Carr University of Art and Design, the Great Northern Way and a wealth of trendy boutiques, bars and restaurants. A 10-minute walk leads to the SkyTrain, Science World, and the False Creek seawall.

"EVAN will set a new standard for affordability and sustainability," says Meola. "People who grew up in this neighbourhood will be able to afford to stay here."

EVAN's eco-friendly features include: Low-flow fixtures, water-efficient landscaping, glazed windows, high-efficiency, Energy Star front-loading washers and dryers, and low-VOC paints, sealants and adhesives, along with onsite recycling and garbage-collection facilities.

A PERFECT BALANCE OF COMFORT, STYLE

TOWNLINE PUTS FOCUS ON LIVABILITY

Townline Homes is an established, mid-size development firm with a strong reputation for meticulous attention to detail. The company's projects include everything from heritage properties to low-rise, wood-frame, mixed-use, single-family homes and concrete high-rise condominiums. Through its subsidiary, TL Housing Solutions, Townline also partners in projects to develop seniors' housing, and subsidized and non-subsidized rental units with varying levels of support services.

"We consider every project from the point of view of the people who will live there," says Chris Colbeck, Townline's vice-president of sales and marketing. "We're a customer-focused company that emphasizes livability."

Rick Ilich founded the company in 1981 by building single-family homes. Success quickly followed; the projects grew in both size and number and Ilich soon expanded into multi-family, mixed-use and non-market developments in Metro Vancouver and on Vancouver Island. As Townline's portfolio grew more diverse, so too did its operations; today, the company handles all aspects of development, from design, construction and finance, to marketing and sales, customer service and city and public liaison.

"When you're building peoples' homes, the devil is in the details," says Colbeck. "Our hands-on approach enables us to pay close attention to every detail. We incorporate features that accommodate the modern lifestyle, such as sliding privacy screens and indoor bicycle lock-ups in urban centres, and additional storage space, dog washes and dog runs in suburban areas. By listening carefully when people describe their lifestyles, we create the kind of residential and commercial places people want as their own."

The company's current properties include:

- **999 SEYMOUR** (downtown Vancouver high-rise): 134 residences incorporating modern design features, with ground-floor retail and office space. More info at 999seymour.com.
- **CLAYTON RISE** (Surrey): 143 spacious townhomes, including eight duplexes. For more, go to claytonrise.com.
- **THE GARDENS** (Richmond): mix of low- and medium-rise residential and retail adjacent to a 12-acre park. More at liveatthegardens.ca.
- **THE HUDSON** (Victoria): 152 modern flats in the transformed 80-year-old Hudson Bay department store. For more, go to hudsonliving.ca.

UPCOMING PROJECTS FROM TOWNLINE

HARMONY: 119 high-rise homes in Central Richmond. For more, go to harmonyrichmond.com.

THE GROVE: 141 park homes in Clayton Surrey. For more, go to thegroveatclayton.com.

HUDSON WALK: Multi-family residential community with ground floor retail in downtown Victoria. For more, go to hudsonwalk.ca.

BURKE MOUNTAIN: Single-family homes in Coquitlam. More at townline.ca.

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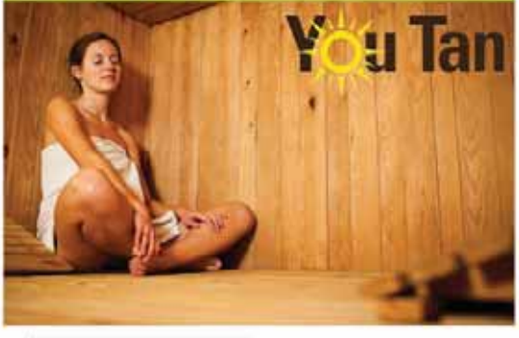

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3 big holiday decor trends

DESIGN CENTRE
Karl Lohnes
home@metronews.ca

Each year we see new colours being introduced to Christmas decor, as if the ornaments we use every year won't suffice.

Holiday decor usually follows suit with fashion or home decor, and this year it's easier than ever to update your holiday decorations and have a trend-setting home for the holidays.

Consider taking a few good holiday standards and adding a twist in order to make your home trend-worthy this year.

Use old ornaments

Colour block old ornaments into a concentrated area — display in a crystal bowl, use on a staircase garland, string on a garland across a window, decorate a spare room or donate to a local shelter. Do this three to four weeks before the holidays to give them time to enjoy.

Glitter Wreath: Mixing gold and silver is all of a sudden OK for holiday decorating this year. CRATEANDBARREL.COM

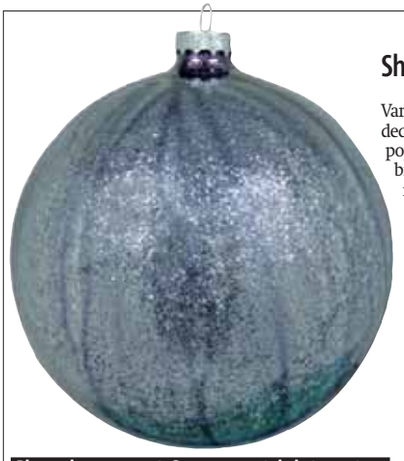
Glam with rustic

We've always been told never to mix the precious metals when decorating — mixing silver and gold has always been a faux pas. Silver has topped the list for sometime now. This year, we are taking the warm and cool metal tones and blending them to help create a more humble look. Using them in a rich, formal setting would be too much formality. Using them in a farmhouse or rustic setting helps add understated glam to a space.

Add a Punch

Wake up the predictable red-gold-green colour combination by adding a shot of cobalt blue or black to the room, it will give the colour scheme a sense of importance with the shot of darkness. A lot of dark brown entered Christmas decor a few years ago, stemming from the trends in home decor furniture. The brown feels a bit predictable, but when mixed with warm gold and a shot of fuchsia or purple, it can take us back to retro-Halston '70s.

Got some outdated trend colours from years past? Group them together and display in a guest room. SUPPLIED



Blown glass ornament: Grey ornaments help to create a sophisticated, cool vibe. URBANBARN.COM

Shades of Grey

Various neutral colours come and go in holiday decor — there's been taupe, black, sage and the ever popular cream colours. This year, look to inject a bit of inspiration coming from fashion. Grey is the new neutral and helps to make our homes take on a cool air of sophistication during the holidays. Team it with fresh greens, golds and citron for a punchy holiday decor. I suggest using this colour as an accent so not to over spend. Grey is the hot neutral this year, but most likely will not have longevity.

Trying to find the greenest Christmas tree this year?

What's greener, a real or artificial Christmas tree?
-Minnie of Vancouver

QUEEN OF GREEN
Tovah Paglaro
green@metronews.ca

Oh Christmas tree, oh Christmas tree, how green is your carbon footprint? The question about the greenest Christmas tree has been one of considerable debate among environmentally conscious merry-makers for the past decade.

Both sides have made valid points: advocates of artificial trees take issue with the practice of cutting down trees in the name of festivity, whereas proponents of real trees argue that it's pretty much impossible for a plastic alternative to be green.

The research team at Ellipsos has provided a definitive answer. In its study, the real tree emerges victorious.

According to Ellipsos, the artificial tree has three times more impact on climate change and resource depletion than the natural tree. That's assuming your artificial tree lasts six years. If your tree will last more than 20 years and if you'd have to drive a long way to buy a real tree, the opposite becomes true.

Regardless of whether you choose real or artificial, there are ways to make sure your evergreen is truly green:

Real Christmas Trees

1. Buy locally.
2. Choose trees from farms that minimize (or do without) pesticides and herbicides.
3. Cut your own with a provincial permit, from lands that must be kept clear anyway. In many provinces, hydro right-of-ways have to be kept clear. This is a win-win way to meet that mandate.

Artificial Christmas Trees

1. Avoid PVCs — the grinchiest of plastics — that most artificial trees are made of. Not only are these hard on the environment, they're bad for your health.
2. Make it last 20 years!

Should neither of these options live up to your desire for a truly sustainable celebration, consider a living Christmas tree. Potted evergreens are just as festive as their cut counterparts! And the recent appearance of rental companies dealing in potted evergreens makes this a hassle-free option even for folks who forgot to dig their tree a hole before the ground froze.

Next Thursday, we'll talk green strategies to decorate that green Christmas tree.

Have questions for the Queen of Green? Write to tpaglaro@davidsuzuki.org or tweet @DavidSuzukiQoG

If you're set on buying a real Christmas tree, consider cutting your own tree from lands that must be clear anyway — a win-win. ISTOCK IMAGES

Time to get your dishes ready

CHARLES THE BUTLER
askcharlesthebutler@metronews.ca
For more, visit charlesmacpherson.com

Dear Mr. Butler,
With both American Thanksgiving and Christmas on the horizon, what can I do to deal with some of my chipped antique dishes to get ready for the holidays?
-Signed, Holiday Lady

What an organized woman you are. Good on you for thinking ahead.

First, you need to know how many people you will be entertaining over the holidays. Will you be having sit down meals or simpler cocktail party gatherings?

Once you know what kind of entertaining you will be doing and how many people you'll be hosting, look through your cupboards to see what you have and what you may want to use.

With your inventory in hand, you now need to find some retailers who specialize in selling single pieces of antique china.

Some cities have great antique markets. For the rest of us who either don't have these antique stores handy or can't find the pieces we need, there are some great online solutions.

I have found three companies that may be able to help you out, and I have used one of them in particular with great success.

The three most popular companies for china replacements are: replacements.com, chinalane.com and patternsearch.ca.

Remember, these are generally expensive. These sites are a great way to replace one or two broken items like a chipped coffee cup or cracked plate.

But if you plan to purchase an entire inventory, this is by far the most expensive route and one that I would not advise.

Concours d'écriture pour femmes francophones

DATE LIMITE : 6 déc. 2012
PLUS D'INFO:
www.reseaufemmes.bc.ca

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SEARCHING FOR VALUED TREASURES

You've heard the old adage: One person's trash is another's treasure. That applies to yard sales and bigger ticket items alike: Cars, clothing, furniture — there's an entire second-hand industry with as many buyers as sellers.

Buying a used car is a no-brainer to many, and while shoppers scour online and newspaper ads for a cheap ride, business is just as plentiful at the car lot.

Shawn Cunningham of Ericksen Infiniti in Edmonton said up to 40 per cent of his market goes to used car sales. The biggest benefit to the consumer, Cunningham says, is not having to pay the inflated cost that drives off the lot with a new vehicle.

"For a one- or two-year-old car, you can still get remaining factory or dealership warranty," Cunningham said. The three-month or 5,000-kilometre peace-of-mind warranty gives buyers a fully-inspected vehicle — so what's to lose? Cunningham says cars that hold their value best in the resale market are luxury brands and Japanese makes.

Clothing is another easy choice when going second-hand. Big players like Value Village, the Salvation Army and Goodwill operate multiple outlets in urban centres, but solo shops abound, too.

JACK HOLLINGSWORTH/PHOTODISC/THINKSTOCK

Discount Thrift Store in Edmonton's west end has a growing number of devotees who flock to the "everything for $1 or less" promise. It's true — from winter coats, to vintage dresses to designer-brand shoes — all for a buck.

"This is the kind of store that makes thrift stores affordable for people," shopper Sam F. says. "It's a great place for students, families and anyone who wants to look great, help the environment and save money."

THRIFT STORE DONATIONS AID YOUR COMMUNITY

For the past 130 years, the Salvation Army has been working towards meeting human needs and being a transforming influence in the communities of the world.

But it can't do this without your help.

"There is currently an urgent need for clothing donations at the Salvation Army Thrift Store locations in Western Canada," says Scott Gilmore, spokesperson for the Salvation Army. "Thrift Stores throughout the region are only able to function because of donations of new or gently-used clothing and housewares."

Your donations of gently-used items to the Salvation Army Thrift Stores is designed to be a win-win, providing needed items for the community at a nominal fee, while generating proceeds for Salvation Army programs.

In 2011-12, Canadians contributed more than $900,000 in vouchers for individuals and families in need to redeem for clothing and other items in a Salvation Army Thrift Store, and close to $3 million that supported Salvation Army programs and services.

Your donations also have a "green" impact on the community, as gently-used items that are donated to the Salvation Army divert that product from going to the landfill.

WAVEBREAK MEDIA/THINKSTOCK

And Thrift Stores give local businesses an opportunity to give back to the community, along with obtaining a tax receipt for their charitable donation.

For more about the Salvation Army Thrift Stores, call 1-800-757-4483 (1-800-PLS-GIVE), or go to thriftstore.ca.

Don't be fooled — not all doughnuts are created equal

Lemon doughnuts generally involve fried dough filled with sticky, tart-sweet yellow goo that tastes more of sugar than of serious lemon.

So here is a way to truly reinvent the lemon doughnut as a baked treat that is at once lighter and more deliciously lemony.

All you have to do is start with a golden cake-style baked doughnut, which is then flecked with the potent flavour of real lemon zest. You finish by topping the doughnuts with a simple powdered sugar-lemon juice glaze. The result is wonderful.

Baked Lemon Doughnuts

These delicious doughnuts are baked. MATTHEW MEAD/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

12 portions
Start to finish: 45 minutes

- 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, room temperature
- 1/4 cup vegetable or canola oil
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 2 eggs
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1 cup powdered sugar

1. Heat the oven to 425 F.

2. Coat 2 doughnut pans with baking spray; you can use pans designed for either large or small doughnuts. A mini doughnut pan will bake more quickly.

3. In a medium bowl, use an electric mixer to beat together the butter, oil, packed brown sugar, granulated sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt, vanilla extract and lemon zest. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, scraping the bowl between additions.

4. Stir in half the flour followed by half the buttermilk, then the remaining flour and finally the remaining buttermilk.

5. Spoon the batter into the prepared pans, filling the doughnut wells to about 1/4 inch from the top. If using a mini doughnut pan, you will need to bake in multiple batches.

6. Bake for 10 to 12 minutes, or until golden and cooked through. Allow to cool in the pan for 10 minutes before turning out onto a rack.

7. To make the glaze, simply stir together the lemon juice and powdered sugar. Dip the tops of the doughnuts in the glaze and allow them to set or enjoy immediately.

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Black Friday madness may cost you your sanity: Is it worth all the hype?

Shop till you drop. Each year, more Canadians join the melee and flock to the States for the shopping extravaganza, and this time round The Bay, amazon.ca, Gap and Toys R Us will join in north of the border

KATHY ULLYOTT
life@metronews.ca

Do you want to shop in this? Black Friday is one of the busiest shopping days in the U.S. and it's getting more popular in Canada with major retail stores joining in and offering bargains. GETTY IMAGES

Stampedes. Pepper-spray attacks on fellow shoppers. Store employees trampled, crushed and even killed.

Accounts of mall mayhem on Black Friday — the day after Thanksgiving in the U.S., when merchants offer deep discounts on everything from skis to sandwich grills — have become part of retail lore. And although such incidents are rare, midnight store openings, across-the-parking-lot lineups and unbelievable deals have become as iconic of American Thanksgiving as pumpkin pie and pilgrim outfits.

Each year, more Canadians join the Black Friday fray — the moniker reflects the fact that it puts retailers "in the black" for the year. Statistics Canada says 4.2 million Canadians travelled to the U.S. last November, presumably to shop. This year, stores in Canada, including The Bay, amazon.ca, Gap and Toys R Us are all trumpeting Black Friday specials.

Still, Sally Ritchie, vice president of communications and marketing for the Retail Council of Canada says Canadians aren't entranced with cross-border door-busting. "Our polling data shows that only six per cent of people in British Columbia and five per cent of Ontarians plan to travel to the U.S. for Black Friday," Ritchie says; 94 per cent of Canadians will be staying put.

So for most Canadians, it seems, the question isn't, "Where does the line start?," but, "What the heck?"

Well, obviously, there are the deals. "It can be thrilling to get a key item for a really good price," says Sarah Kutulakos, an American now living in Canada. "And there's the social aspect, the ritual. You have Thanksgiving dinner with family and friends, then you all get up early on Friday to go shopping." (Note: Kutulakos admits she doesn't go in for lining up herself.)

But more subtle psychology may be at work as well. Aparna Labroo, a consumer psychologist and the Patricia C. Ellison Professor of Marketing at the Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, points out that people want things more when they appear scarce. Deep discounts, offering those savings for a limited time and making only a few of those products available (to, say, the first 100 customers) are all ways retailers "manipulate scarcity cues" — in other words, motivate consumers.

Enough to pitch a tent in an overnight lineup? Maybe. "People actually infer value (of a product) from the effort they put into getting that product," says Labroo.

In other words, having to line up is — for some shoppers — not only not a deterrent, it's proof that what they want is worth lining up for. "The many people present, all waiting, can heighten the sense of scarcity."

And, apparently, the need for a $38 Blu-ray player.

Black Friday facts

- **Camping out.** Last year, a couple in Florida camped out on the sidewalk in front of a Best Buy for 12 days in order to be the first in line for Black Friday sales.
- **Buy Nothing Day.** Twenty years ago, Buy Nothing Day was created as an anti-consumerism alternative to Black Friday.
- **Holiday cheer?** Ninety per cent of Black Friday shoppers will be buying goods for themselves.
- **Online.** Sixteen per cent of Canadians will buy goods online from U.S. retailers on Black Friday.
- **Cyber Monday.** The term has become an international marketing term used by online retailers in the U.K., Portugal, Germany and Chile.
- **Turnout.** The National Retail Federation anticipates 134 million people will hit the stores this Thanksgiving weekend.

Decided to risk a Black Friday spree? Stay safe out there!

The Black Friday shopper's emergency first-aid kit

- **Rolls of gauze.** Extremely compact and light, yet strong enough to tie your trunk down, or a 42-inch television to the top of your car.
- **Adhesive bandages.** For credit-card blisters or paper cuts from coupons and flyers.
- **Finger splints.** Entering your debit-card PIN repeatedly can cause carpal tunnel syndrome.
- **Caffeine pills.** Sure, there might be a Tim's close enough for an emergency run, but do you really want to risk your place in line?
- **Acetaminophen.** Even if you're not headache-prone, loudspeaker announcements and other shoppers yelling at their kids/into their phones/at line-cutters can take a toll.
- **Scotch in a hip flask.** In case all else fails.

Want the deals without the lines? Cyber Monday is a stressless alternative. And with a smartphone, you don't need to be at a computer, or even at home, you can do your shopping on your morning commute. A few great apps:

- **Black Friday Shopping (blackfriday.com, free):** Get breaking Black-Friday ads, link directly to 1,200 top retailers and get cash-back coupons
- **My Christmas List (99 cents):** Plan gifts for everybody on your list; set and stick to a budget; keep track of spending; compare prices and share your lists
- **Price Check Guru (free):** Enter any item to find the lowest online price and connect directly to that retailer to buy
- **PayPal (free):** Get pay for your purchases immediately without having to enter your credit card info every time.

If you want to get out there and shop till you drop, best that you get the lowdown on survival. GETTY IMAGES

[1]LIMITED TIME OFFER. Offer valid on qualifying purchases of $20 CDN or more made between Nov. 21, 2012 and Dec. 5, 2012. 20x offer applies to the total base reward miles earned on qualifying purchase amount excluding shipping, duty and taxes. Base Offer may vary. Click on store logo on airmilesshops.ca for Offer details. Collectors must sign in at airmilesshops.ca before purchasing in order to earn reward miles. Offer can be combined with other Bonus reward miles Offers. Does not apply to purchases made at the following stores: Netflix or Rogers Magazine subscriptions (including *Chatelaine, Today's Parent* and *Maclean's).* All other stores are subject to change and may be withdrawn at any time. Reward miles will appear in your account within 120 days.

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On your mark, get set, go ... shopping wild

Black Friday should be a silly and fun way to kick off the holiday season. Don't overdo it. ISTOCK IMAGE

But use good judgment while you're at it.

Don't get caught in the frenzy and spend money erratically just because you find discounts

MONICA WEYMOUTH
Metro World News in Philadelphia

Black Friday is a delicate balancing act between scoring as many great deals as possible and not turning into a crazed shopping Grinch. It's not a day for amateurs, so we hit up Dana Holmes, editor-in-chief of Gifts.com, for some expert tips on saving money and sanity.

Buy thoughtful gifts, not cheap stuff

It's hard to say no to a great sale, but don't just buy cashmere scarves because they're half-off for another hour. "Remember that a great deal isn't always a great gift," says Holmes. "Make sure you have a list of who you're shopping for, a budget for each person and some ideas for each person. I like to put some adjectives next to their names along with some of their favourite stores to stay focused."

Keep your receipts

You will make impulse buys that you regret — it's part of the day. "Keep a zippered pouch in your purse to keep your designated Black Friday receipts," advises Holmes. "You don't want to misplace any — you're buying a lot of stuff, you're excited and when you get home you may realize you don't want all of it."

Bum a ride

"I'm a big advocate for carpooling," says Holmes. "Go with your shopping buddies and you can save a parking space and gas, which is a hot commodity right now." Not to mention, it's nice to have company in the parking-garage traffic — because oh, yes, that is a thing that happens.

Cross-check for online deals

Some deals, such as door-busters, are strictly in-store offers. But increasingly, retailers are offering the same sales online with plenty of perks. "If you see something you like, check it out on your phone — sometimes it can actually be just as cheap to buy it online, get it shipped and get it gift-wrapped for free," says Holmes. "Then you don't have to lug it around all day."

Quoted

"There will be lines, parking will be tough, things will run out — you have to enjoy it for it to be worth it."

Dana Holmes, editor-in-chief, Gifts.com

Don't fake being an early bird

Ultimately, Black Friday should be a silly, fun way to kick off the holiday season. If waiting in the dark for your favourite store's doors to open isn't your idea of fun, sleep in and skip the door-buster deals. "It's more about the camaraderie — it's for a special kind of person who really enjoys that," says Holmes of the 5 a.m. openings. "Everybody else, just go when you want. There will be lines, parking will be tough, things will run out — you have to enjoy it for it to be worth it."

Gift-list assist

Before you make your list and check it twice, head on over to Gifts.com and take the gift personality quiz. It can help you figure out what to buy for your picky fashionista sister before you melt down at the Cinnabon stand.

'Stache-sporting Kripps leads team to sled track

Bobsled. Seven-year veteran Justin Kripps targets top-10 finish in World Cup event at Whistler Sliding Centre

In this file photo, Canadian bobsledders, from left, Neville Wright, Justin Kripps, Pierre Lueders and Jesse Lumsden celebrate after completing Heat 4 during the men's four-man bobsled at the Vancouver Winter Olympics on Feb. 27, 2010, in Whistler. Kripps is driving a sled this weekend for the World Cup event in Whistler. CLIVE MASON/GETTY IMAGES FILE

Bring up a discussion about moustaches, and Justin Kripps is all ears.

He's hoping to have a moustache decal on the front of the Canadian bobsled he pilots this weekend for the World Cup event in Whistler, although it appeared as of Wednesday that he may have to wait a little longer into the week for that to happen.

But that hasn't stopped Kripps from growing what he calls a "sweet 'stache" of his own during Movember.

Kripps originally got the idea from his Canadian teammate, Jesse Lumsden, three years ago, and he has grown out his cookie duster every November since in support of men's cancer.

The cause is particularly important to him.

Kripps's grandfather battled prostate cancer and survived. His father, Kripps said, has gone through melanoma.

"You know, it's a problem all over society," Kripps said of cancer.

"But when it affects your family and friends it makes you want to do something about it."

Kripps is hoping that the moustache sticker for his bobsled arrives in Whistler Thursday.

It sure would give a different look to the Canadian bobsled team, which has three four-man sleds in competition in Whistler.

This weekend's event at the 1,450-metre track at the Whistler Sliding Centre is the third stop on the World Cup circuit. The best bobsled and skeleton athletes have converged on the host site of the 2010 Olympics for the competition.

Kripps, manning a sled with Luke Demetre, Jean-Nicolas Carriere and Cody Sorensen, is hoping for a top-10 finish in the event.

Originally born in Hawaii, once a resident of Summerland, B.C., and now splitting his time between Vancouver and Calgary, the 25-year-old Kripps is in his seventh year in bobsled, but only his third as a driver.

He controlled the brakes when sliding with Pierre Lueders.

It was Lueders who recommended that Kripps take on driving — this only about three weeks after the 2010 Olympics had wrapped up.

"I went to Lake Placid, New York, to take the driver's course," said Kripps.

"There was a real short classroom course, talking about the physics and the speed of the track, and then you start heading out onto the track," Kripps said. "You learn what happens if you don't turn the sled and what to do in an emergency.

"The only way to learn is to get in the sled and do it."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"It's a bit of a different sport up front."

Justin Kripps, who is in only his third year as a driver in bobsled after four years as a brakeman, including a stint with Pierre Lueders.

Training session

Wednesday's training session included competitors from men's four-man bobsled, two-man bobsled, women's bobsled, and men's and women's skeleton.

4 SPORTS

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NBA. Thunder cut short Clippers' win streak

Kendrick Perkins challenged his Oklahoma City Thunder teammates before a showdown of division leaders with the Los Angeles Clippers on Wednesday night.

The Thunder had lost their first two games this season against other top teams in the Western Conference, and Perkins wanted that trend to stop immediately.

It wasn't easy, but Oklahoma City got the job done.

Kevin Durant scored 35 points, Russell Westbrook added 23 and Oklahoma City's all-star tandem scored all of the Thunder's points in overtime in a 117-111 victory over the Clippers.

"It felt good to finally get one of those wins, and we can move on now," Durant said.

Westbrook connected on a three-pointer from the left wing to open the scoring in overtime, and Durant rattled one in from about the same spot two possessions later for a 108-104 advantage.

Westbrook then answered DeAndre Jordan's three-point play with a baseline jumper, and Oklahoma City was able to close it out from the foul line.

"This is a good win for us, especially against a team like that, that had some success lately," said Thabo Sefolosha, who hounded Clippers all-star Chris Paul much of the game.

Blake Griffin led Los Angeles with 23 points and Jamal Crawford scored 20 for the Clippers, who had a six-game winning streak snapped after entering the game tied for the best record in the West.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Los Angeles Clippers forward Blake Griffin goes up for a shot against the Thunder Wednesday in Oklahoma City. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHLPA submits offer but sides 'still far apart'

Lockout. Union moves toward league in revenue sharing as talks resume in New York

The NHL and NHL Players' Association finally seem to be speaking the same language, but they still have a gap to bridge in negotiations on a collective bargaining agreement.

The union tabled a comprehensive proposal Wednesday that generated a tepid response from the NHL. However, commissioner Gary Bettman acknowledged the six-page offer was a step in the right direction and the document appeared to offer a path forward in talks, with the sides now envisioning the same type of economic system.

"There was some movement in our direction and it was appreciated," said Bettman. "We're still far apart. But hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion."

The union proposed a 50-50 split of revenues during the five-year deal along with $393 million US in deferred make-whole payments throughout. Two weeks ago, the league offered $211 million and a 50-50 split.

NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr acknowledged that his constituents are anxious to end the lockout and indicated that the new offer is "about as good" as the players are willing to make.

"(The players) are suffering right along with the fans," said Fehr. "We made an enormous move in the owners' direction to try and end it — at least as of today that hasn't been successful."

Until now, the union had been pushing for a system that would see players paid a fixed amount of revenue each season rather than receiving a percentage of it. However, the new offer included some safeguards to ensure they'd be protected in the event league revenues stalled, including a clause that states the players' share can't drop from year to year. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Yet to be resolved

Contracts could still be sticking point

There is also ground to cover on contract issues.

The NHLPA offer included a rule that would punish teams who sign players to long-term, back-diving contracts — something the league has identified as an important issue. It also called for players making more than $1 million US in the minors to have their salary count against the cap.

The union chose not to adopt the NHL's proposed changes to unrestricted free agency, entry-level deals and salary arbitration.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CFL

Argos coach doesn't want players to score ... until game day

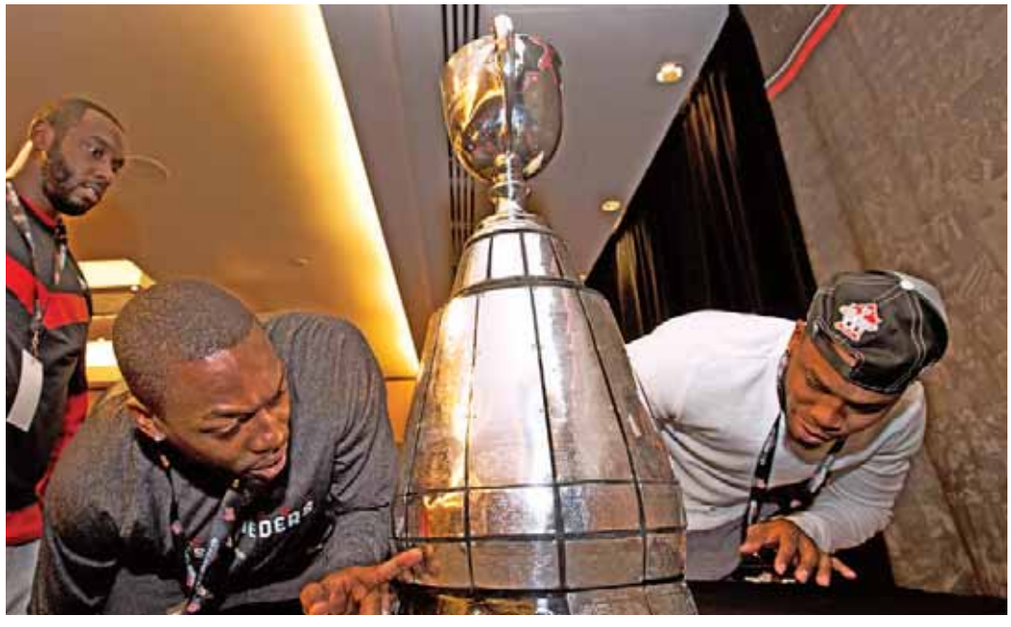
Scott Milanovich wants the Toronto Argonauts to control their libido during Grey Cup week.

The Argos rookie head coach says he doesn't want his players scoring off the field prior to the big game. Toronto takes on the Calgary Stampeders for the CFL championship Sunday at Rogers Centre.

But he also has a personal reason for taking this approach.

"I have two young daughters at home right now that are probably watching this press conference, so my take on it is going to be 'I believe in abstinence,'" Milanovich said Wednesday, answering what has become the traditional last question of the Grey Cup coaches' news conference.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Stampeders get acquainted with cup

Calgary Stampeders teammates Fred Bennett, left, and Chris Randle have a close look at the Grey Cup during the West Division champions media lunch in Toronto on Wednesday. NATHAN DENETTE/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Skiing. Alpine Canada looking for ways to include Vonn in men's race

The president of Alpine Canada hasn't given up on Lindsey Vonn racing men at Lake Louise, Alta.

The first time might not be in a World Cup race, though. Max Gartner says he's been talking to Vonn's sponsor Red Bull.

"We're working on some plans, but we do hope this will happen down the road," Gartner said. "We do hope it will happen in Lake Louise.

Vonn asked FIS, the world governing body of skiing, if she could race in the men's World Cup downhill and super-G this weekend at Lake Louise. The reigning Olympic champion has 11 World Cup victories and 17 podiums in total.

Lindsey Vonn GETTY IMAGES FILE

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA

Love not the answer as Wolves fall to Nuggets

Andre Iguodala had 18 points and nine rebounds to spoil Kevin Love's surprise season debut in the Denver Nuggets' 101-94 victory over the Minnesota Timberwolves on Wednesday night.

Danilo Gallinari scored 19 points for the Nuggets, who withstood a furious start by the Timberwolves.

Love scored 34 points and grabbed 14 rebounds, helping the Wolves take a 17-point lead in the first half.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MLB. Buehrle gets in two cents on way out of Miami

Mark Buehrle issued a parting shot at Miami Marlins management after his stay with the team lasted only one tumultuous season.

The left-hander, who signed a four-year contract a year ago, was part of the blockbuster trade that also sent all-star shortstop Jose Reyes, right-hander Josh Johnson and two other players to the Toronto Blue Jays. With the deal, the Marlins pared $146.5 million US in future payroll.

"I'm upset with how things turned out in Miami," Buehrle said in a statement issued Wednesday through his agent, Jeff Berry. "But I'm putting it behind me and looking forward to moving on with my career."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Quoted

"Just like the fans in South Florida, I was lied to on multiple occasions."

New Blue Jays left-hander Mark Buehrle in a statement issued Wednesday

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Flattery will come easily to you today but you must use it with care. Your way with words may be able to win others over to your side but do you really want everyone knowing what you are up to? Think about it.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
If you need to connect with someone you have drifted apart from recently, now is the time to make your move. Don't wait for them to approach you, pick up the phone or knock on their door and say "Hi!"

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
You have been worrying for no good reason and what takes place over the next few days will remind you just how fortunate you truly are. Once your mind is in a better place, your physical health will improve as well.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Use your imagination and follow your dream, wherever it might lead. Some people may say you have taken leave of your senses, but more likely the opposite is true: You have at last found your true calling.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
The Sun in Sagittarius gives you bags of self-confidence and you must use it today to help a loved one or friend get over some kind of loss or trauma. The best way to do that is to make them laugh.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't try to keep your feelings to yourself. Let the whole world know why you are so full of love and laughter. Most likely it's because you have finally realized that life is supposed to be enjoyed, not dreaded.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
There is someone in your life you need to pay a lot more attention to. You know who this someone is and you know it is your responsibility to reach out to them. So what are you waiting for? Do it now.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
The Sun may have moved out of your birth sign but today Venus, planet of emotional and material values, moves in, which is not a bad swap. Who and what do you truly value? Make sure you don't lose them.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You feel good about yourself now but how do you feel about other people? You may have reason to believe that certain individuals don't deserve your friendship, but why make an issue of it? Forgive, forget and move on.

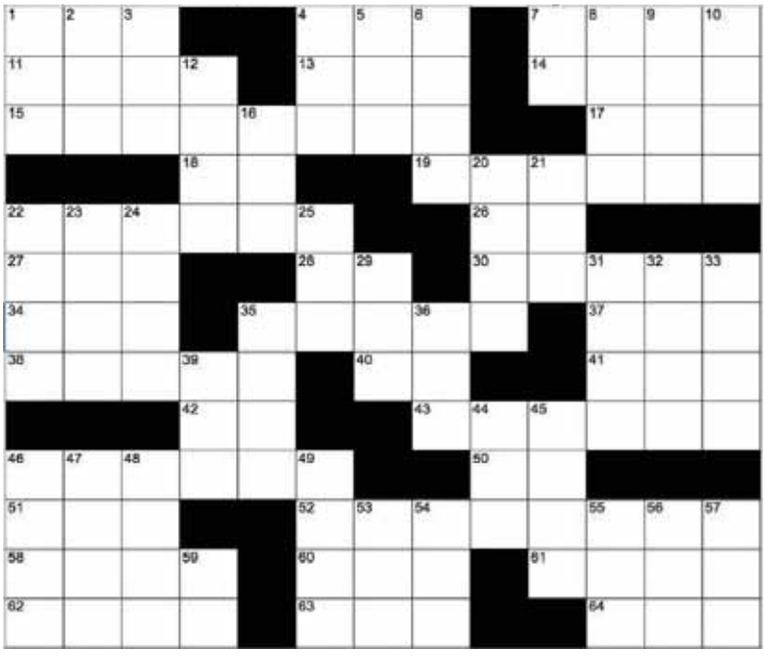
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Give your mind and your body a rest today, and let others do the heavy lifting for a change. Friendships are under excellent stars now, so why not have fun with your friends? Laughter is always the best medicine.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Someone will ask you for advice today and you will be happy to give it, but do they really want to know the truth? If what you have to tell them is not what they want to hear, it could cause a falling out.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Steer clear of subjects and situations that could lead to conflict. That is especially important on the work front where, if you speak your mind, you could make a powerful enemy. Not everyone wants to hear the truth. **SALLY BROMPTON**

Crossword

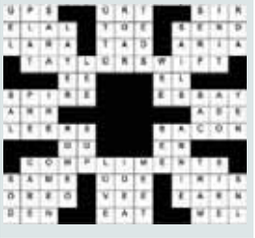
BY BETTY MARTIN



Across
1. Children's game
4. Decide on
7. Rich tasty dinner
11. Small inlets
13. Prefix meaning recent
14. Roof gutter
15. Spat
17. Cat or dog
18. Egyptian Sun God
19. Cattle
22. Moves slightly
26. Bible pt.
27. Danson of Cheers
28. Mate for Ma
30. Highway exits
34. Spanish cheer
35. AM or FM instrument
37. Served at Archie Bunker's Place
38. Fridge maker
40. Type measure
41. Meadow
42. Roman two
43. Basement
46. Fashion designer McCartney
50. First two vowels in a sequence
51. Blue Bloods actor Selleck
52. Microbes
58. Ticklish muppet
60. Pitcher's stat.
61. Vampire novelist: Anne —
62. Cruel or nasty
63. Served with crumpets
64. Actor James Van — Beek

Down
1. — la la
2. Atmosphere
3. Joke
4. — Tree Hill
5. Writing implement
6. Children
7. Wind direction (abbr.)
8. Pre-record
9. For always
10. Dampens
12. Ride the waves
16. Gymnastics equipment
20. Bull
21. Airport info.
22. Portico
23. Rudder
24. Brainstorm
25. Health club
29. Summer refreshment
31. Teen hangout
32. Beg
33. Brand
35. Method of transport
36. Company abbr.
39. Nothing
44. Sit down to a meal
45. Ogle
46. Flower part
47. Entice
48. Stone or Watson
49. Help in a robbery
53. — You Afraid of the Dark?
54. Canadian Automobile Association (abbr.)
55. Toss out
56. Drink cooler
57. — Lingus
59. "— Golden Pond"

Yesterday's Crossword



What's online

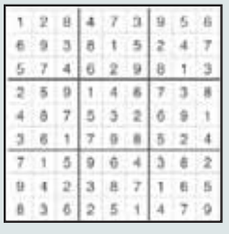
See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

		4	6			1	9	
7						5		3
	6			8				7
	5				9	2		
			2		7			
		7	3				8	
3				9			1	
5		9						4
	7	8			1	9		

Yesterday's Sudoku



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Friday 10°/5° Showers 80%
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TWN incorporates MSC data

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